

IV.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TOKUGAWA DYNASTY, AND JAPAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE ORIENT IN THE EARLY AGES OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA.



AFTER the lapse of centuries has softened the glare of the events they record it is easy to read the pages of the past; easy to decipher the lessons they teach when the scholar's interest is calmly academical. But what we thus gain in the judicial faculty we lose in the appreciative. We see only the outlines of the picture, not its sensational details; only pallid abstractions instead of vivid realities. And if our sense of the circumstances is so imperfect, must not our estimate of the men that dealt with them be correspondingly defective? This consciousness of meagre retrospect oppresses us acutely as we peruse the records of Japan; for while they tell with sufficient accuracy about the massing of armies, the storming of castles, the fortunes of great families, and the enactments of shrewd rulers, they preserve, with regard to the characters and private lives of the men they discuss, a silence absolutely uniform except where it is broken by accident. We long to follow to their homes and pass a quiet day in company with these intrepid fighters and magnificent usurpers, whose figures, as they move across the pageant of their stormy era, even the dull brush of the stolid ideographist has not been able to rob of electric suggestions; long to know how they loved and how they lived outside of camp or court, and to discover whether the motives of their splendid achievements or splendid excesses lay beyond the range of those small emotions that make all humanity akin.

Under an old pine tree in the island of the Nine Provinces there is a tomb, insignificant but not untended. It contains the ashes of Shibata Katsuiye and his wife, Odani. Besieged in his castle by the *Taiko*, and seeing that all hope of successful resistance must be abandoned, Shibata resolved to adopt the *Samurai's* exit from disgrace, death by his own hand. "He made known his intention to his vassals and told them that if they pleased to surrender so as to save themselves and their families, they had his full permission to do so. But they declared that they preferred to die with him. Preparations were therefore made to fire the castle at several places simultaneously, and by Shibata's orders a feast was spread, that the warriors might pledge each other before the end. Ignorant of what these things signified, Shibata's wife and other ladies of the castle attended at the feast and filled the wine

cups. When the revel was at its height, Shibata informed Odani of his purpose, and bade her fly with his children and the other women. But she refused, nor would any of the women consent to abandon their husbands. Presently the fires were ignited, and Shibata, having decapitated his wife and children, killed himself, the rest following his example."

What a scene! What a description! It is thus that the Japanese historian dismisses incidents of sublime pathos and transcendent devotion. Perhaps he is right. Perhaps the tragedy towers above all comment. But as we look at the charred and rusty fragments of Shibata's armor, gathered from the ruins of his castle three hundred and fourteen years ago, and now preserved in a little temple near the old pine grove, it torments us to think that between the men of these later ages and the actors in such a drama no bridge of vivid sympathy has been traced by the pen of a faithful annalist. And so it is with nearly all the great figures of Japan's past. They are buried far beyond the reach of intimate acquaintance. We can no more clasp mental hands with them across the gulf of centuries than we can replace those fire-eaten links of shattered armor on the hero that once wore them, or reconstruct the figure of the sweet and equally heroic Odani from the ashes in the grave under the pine tree.

Never does this want of a biographer distress us more sharply than in the case of Ieyasu, the founder of the Tokugawa dynasty of Shoguns. Japanese historians tell us simply that he was a man of indomitable courage in war, suave methods in peace, wonderful astuteness and infinite patience. Of all those attributes his recorded deeds are eloquent: we have no need to be informed of them. But for the rest we know little. Considering, across an interval of nearly three hundred years, not merely the battles that he won and the strongholds that he captured, but also the administrative system that he elaborated, our enthusiasm for the brilliant general is eclipsed by our admiration for the astute statesman. We perceive that on foundations which to all his predecessors had proved shifting sands, and with materials in which their hands could find neither consistency nor stability, he was able to erect a structure so shrewdly adapted to the purpose of the builder, so exhaustively inclusive of the resources at his command, so astutely calculated to withstand the disintegrating influences fatal to all previous creations of ambitious enterprise, that even now, measured by the wisdom that succeeds the event, the perfection of his plan astonishes us. To separate himself mentally from the storm and stress of his surroundings; to project his gaze beyond the tumult of present events that nevertheless demanded his constant attention and control; to analyze the causes that had condemned his country to five centuries of battle and bloodshed; to synthesize his conclusions into a system that should substitute for the incessant din of strife and the prevailing peril of life and property three hundred years of happy tranquillity and undisturbed security,—such are the achievements that history has to place to the credit of the nation that produced him. It is the fate of all great performances to be sceptically appraised by later generations. King Arthur and his Broceliande seer become the fabled

Lemenitz and the mad Myrdhinn; the author of the Iliad and the Odyssey loses his individuality and passes into a mere pseudonym for a golden age of poetry; the Bard of Avon receives only vicarious immortality. So, too, it is said of Ieyasu that he was but the partial planner of the organization of the Tokugawa Regency, and that many of the details, as well

as the perfecting of the whole, must be attributed to his grandson, Iyemitsu, the third Shogun of the line. Iyemitsu was undoubtedly a great statesman. The old adage that hereditary genius skips a generation seems to have been confirmed in his case. But there are sufficient reasons for concluding that he achieved rather than originated; that he deepened, but



TEMPLE OF HACHIMAN AT KAMAKURA.

Hachiman is the name under which the Emperor Ōjin is worshipped as the God of War. The Temple dates from the end of the 12th century.

did not deviate from, the grooves traced by his grandfather. Ieyasu was the architect. The short span of life that remained to him after the battle of Sekigahara could not suffice to consummate his projects, but certainly did suffice for their clear delineation.

It has been seen that the doctrine of the Mikado's divine descent survived all the vicissitudes of Imperial life. Weeds might flourish in the neglected courtyards of the palace at Kyoto; the corpse of an Emperor might lie uninterred for weeks through lack of money to perform the funeral rites; sovereigns might be held prisoners by haughty subjects, or compelled to abdicate at the first display of a tendency to exercise independent governing sway; but the theory of the monarch's sacrosanctity remained absolutely unchallenged. Even to-day, when the merciless scalpel of the critic lays open the mummy-cases of antiquity, and discloses dust and emptiness in places peopled by tradition with figures of splendid humanity, it is difficult, if not impossible, to find a Japanese writer bold enough to scrutinize the legends that environ the throne. In one of the recent epidemics of cholera that Japan has received as part of the paraphernalia of her new civilization, there perished an antiquarian of note, Ninagawa Noritane. He was a shrewd man and a learned. The history of old times he knew by heart; the suggestions of a shard he read accurately; he could assess the value of evidence with acumen, and the vaporing of contemporary sciolists never deceived him for a moment. Yet that the ceramic art was practised in Japan more than twenty cen-

turies ago he gravely inferred from a legend that the disgraced deity Susa-no-o used a row of earthenware pots to administer intoxicating drink to a dragon demon. Western folk can scarcely persuade themselves to believe that in a land where journalists preach, politicians agitate, and parliaments debate, the sovereign's direct descent from heavenly ancestors is still an article of popular faith. Yet so it is; and so it was most indisputably when Ieyasu retired to his castle in Shizuoka and devoted the last ten years of his life to elaborating the system that was to give peace to his country and uninterrupted tenure of power to his family during nearly three centuries. He had to provide, in the first place, that the sovereign should no longer be a puppet in the hands of ambitious nobles, and that insurrection should no longer be able to borrow legitimacy from an enforced semblance of Imperial sanction. He approached this difficult problem boldly but with extreme subtlety. Fuller recognition than ever was given to the divinity of the occupant of the throne, but, at the same time, the logical sequence of the doctrine was insisted on. The descendant of the gods must not be contaminated by contact with mundane affairs. His intercession with high heaven on behalf of his subjects must never be troubled or warped by the passions or prejudices of common life. Absolute seclusion thus became a plain essential of the programme. Imperial progresses, visits to shrines, audiences — such things ceased to be part of the sovereign's existence. He remained the source of honors and titles, but an inaccessible source. The great territorial magnates were forbidden to visit the palace, or even to enter the quarter of Kyoto in which it stood. The court nobles might not intermarry with the families of the military chieftains unless the permission of the government in Yedo (Tokyo) had been obtained: these two classes were to be kept rigidly distinct. And never by either the one or the other might the Emperor's face be viewed. Even when the ministers of the court approached the throne, they saw nothing of their sovereign except the obscure outlines of a dark figure seated behind a curtain of finely woven bamboo. But, though shorn of temporal power, the Emperor gained in mystical dignity. He received periodically the profound homage of the Yedo Regents. From him the living derived their titles; the dead, their apotheosis. In the speech of the people he was always "the Son of Heaven;" in their writings, the line where his name figured might never be invaded by any other ideograph. A magnificent abstraction, the possibility of his becoming involved, voluntarily or involuntarily, in any intrigue grew more and more remote in proportion as his godlike dignity obtained fuller appreciation. That was the end contemplated by Ieyasu. Against the head of the secular administration, the Shogun in Yedo, who held his commission direct from the sovereign, every insurrection unsanctioned by the Emperor would be technically rebellion, and every insurgent a traitor to the throne. Ieyasu made it virtually impossible for any one to obtain that sanction or even to seek it. Then he took the map of feudal Japan and reconstructed it with the art of a master in statecraft. Like all things really great, his principle of procedure was simple. Wherever risk could be discerned of coalitions hostile to his house, he inserted a wedge formed of his own

SACRED BRIDGE AT NIKKO.

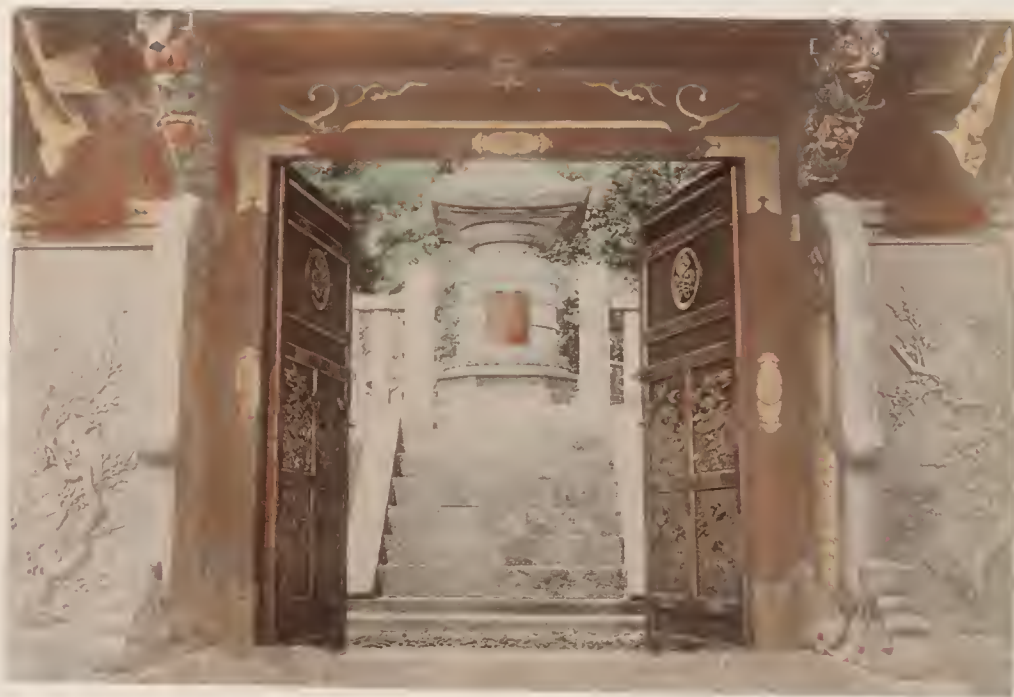
This bridge, which spans a mountain stream flowing between the village of Nikko and the enclosure containing the twenty-eight great Nikko temples, was built in 1638. It is 84 feet long and 18 feet wide. It was formerly closed to all persons except the Shoguns, save twice a year when it was opened to pilgrims. It is now kept constantly closed except to the Emperor, who as a special mark of distinction invited General Grant to use the bridge upon the occasion of his visit to Nikko. With characteristic modesty General Grant refrained from exercising his privilege.







partisans. Two hundred and thirty-seven military nobles held practically the whole of Japan in fief. One hundred and fifteen of these were Tokugawa vassals; men on whose fidelity absolute reliance could be placed. The Tokugawa *Shogun* wove these two hundred and thirty-seven fiefs into a pattern such that one of the hundred and fifteen loyal threads always had a place between two of the hundred and twenty-two whose fealty was doubtful or their revolt probable. The operation can be thus described in a single sentence, but its achievement in practice must have been a huge task. Years of contriving were needed and years of adjustment. For of course it will be understood that the work could not be undertaken in the brief manner of mapping out a garden or designing a house. Its progress had to be dependent upon opportunity. The materials becoming accessible fortuitously and at uncertain intervals, their employment can only have been approximately regulated by the general plan. We cannot now affirm that from the time when fief-bestowing power first came into the hands of Ieyasu he used it with full prescience of the vast organization which his supremacy would ultimately make possible. But we can affirm that the organization remained as a proof and a buttress of his supremacy. It would appear that his foresight was as clear as the prosecution of his purpose was unerring and orderly, and that from the inception to the completion of the work its general evolution suffered no interruption from errors of preconception or confusion of arrangement. He bequeathed to his sons and their sons an immense congeries of principalities, so arranged as to offer automatic resistance to rebellion or anarchy. It does not fall within the scope of this essay to set forth the minutiae of the plan here briefly epitomized. Students of history can find, in any accurate record, full details as to the locality, magnitude and political complexion of each Japanese fief during the Tokugawa era, together with the names, titles and revenues of the feudatories. Mighty lords they were, with incomes varying from nine thousand to a million pounds sterling annually; almost autocratic within the limits of their fiefs; but ruling, on the whole, with moderation and sagacity, through the instrumentality of councillors who restrained their excesses and



SHOGUN'S TOMB IN SHIBA PARK, TOKYO.

often, while bowing to their nominal authority, stripped them of its reality as completely as the Emperor himself had been stripped by that other and greater councillor, the *Shogun*.

The programme of Ieyasu did not stop at completely segregating the prime source of all authority and paralyzing the disloyal actions of the feudal lords by the loyal interactions



VEGETABLE MONGER.

The bamboo pole with wicker baskets suspended from either end takes the place of a huckster's cart.

of his own vassals: it extended also to the provision of other safeguards for lack of which family after family, raised to brief pre-eminence by the genius of an heroic founder, had collapsed incontinently after his death. Fealty in Japan took precedence of every virtue, but, in a certain sense, succumbed readily to ambition. Wife, children, fortune, life,—all

these things the loyal vassal used to hold ready for immediate sacrifice on the altar of his lord's interests or safety. Yet he seldom hesitated to usurp his lord's authority, so long as it could be exercised in the latter's name and without impairing the dignity or imperilling the permanence of his house. Illustrations of the latter fact abound in every page of Japanese history. From the *Shogun* down to the factor of the pettiest banneret, all were ready to grasp the substance of their seignior's power provided that the shadow could be left with him. Just as the Soga, the Fujiwara, the Taira, the Ashikaga and the Tokugawa stripped the Emperor of administrative authority while acknowledging him as its sole and sacred source, so the Minamoto and the Hojo furnished the spectacle of "shadow-Shoguns," and so, too, the head of nearly every noble family in Japan has been, at some time or other, reduced to the position of a mere *fainéant* while the affairs of his fief were controlled by a vassal. These vicissitudes of sway are not attributed by the Japanese moralist to disloyal impulses on the part of those responsible for them. The code of fealty seems to indicate that not the repository of power but the power itself claimed allegiance and devotion. It was disloyal for a vassal to conspire against his lord and usurp his authority, but it was not disloyal to usurp the authority provided that the manner of its exercise did not imperil the lord's nominal position. The distinction seems subtle, but is easily understood when we remember that the tenure of a fief by any nobleman depended ultimately on his ability to hold it. So

long as the affairs of a *daimiate* were duly administered, so long as no catastrophe invited public attention nor any glaring evidences of misrule forced themselves upon the observation of the court in Yedo, so long was the *Daimyo's* position assured. Thus it fell out that ostensibly to avert catastrophe or prevent conspicuous misrule, vassals deprived their lord of power and exercised it in his name. Faithless service, from one point of view, but faithful from another, and at all events extenuated by the fact that the deposal of a feudal chief involved the ruin of all his vassals. Ieyasu read history too accurately to imagine that, unless special safeguards were provided, his descendants could be saved from the vicissitudes to which previous dynasties of Shoguns had one after another succumbed. He designated four great houses as the perpetual sources from which a regent (*Gotairo*) should be supplied in the event of a minor's succeeding to the *Shogunate*; he conferred rich estates upon his three youngest sons, and enacted that from their families a *Shogun* should be appointed, failing an heir in the direct line; and he conferred on eighteen vassal houses the privilege of furnishing throughout all time occupants of the highest official positions. In this ample plexus of co-operative interests, intrigue or disloyalty could scarcely fail to become entangled and choked to death.

Considering this system as it is here sketched, a defect is easily detected. The feudal chiefs were autocratic within the limits of their fiefs. It is true that their acts were scrutinized from Yedo; that incompetence or lawlessness involved the ruthless confiscation of their estates, and that Ieyasu himself never suffered the ties of consanguinity or the memory of ancestral service to influence the iron rigidity of the justice that he meted out to the military nobles. But for the rest the principle of local autonomy received full recognition. Each



SPECTACLE BRIDGE AT KYOTO.

Crossing Lotus pond in Temple garden.

territorial noble was practically absolute within the confines of his own domain. His sway extended to matters of finance, education, industry, justice and military preparation. Only the rights of coining money, of maintaining or constructing lines of communication and of declaring or concluding war were reserved to the government in Tokyo. Under such

circumstances, the development of dangerous local independence was an evident danger. Ieyasu obviated it by a device of singular simplicity and thorough efficacy. Each feudal chief was required to spend a part of every second year in Yedo, and to leave his sons there always as hostages for his own fealty. This provision with regard to the sons was abolished in the middle of the seventeenth century, but not until 1862 did the obligation imposed on the *Daimyo* themselves undergo any relaxation. It has been alleged that the conception of the *Sankin Kōtai* — so the practice was called — originated with Iyemitsu, grandson of Ieyasu and third *Shogun* of the Tokugawa line. Careful research shows, however, that Ieyasu formed the plan and that Iyemitsu put it into operation. Its effect upon the prosperity and embellishment of Yedo has been alluded to in a previous chapter. Its effect upon the supremacy of the Tokugawa and the allegiance of the military nobles needs little comment. On the eve of the last struggle that placed him in undoubted possession of the reins of power, Ieyasu found himself at the head of an army many of whose captains had to choose between abandoning their families and deserting his cause. Their wives and children had fallen into the hands of their leader's opponents, and could be saved only by the exodus of their husbands and fathers from his camp. He gave them permission to go, and offered them supplies and conduct for the journey. Every man stayed. In truth, from time immemorial the affection of a Japanese *Samurai* for his family had always been subordinated to fidelity toward his feudal chief. With such an experience to guide him, Ieyasu cannot have attached paramount importance to the presence of the territorial nobles' wives and sons in his capital, and we can easily understand why the rule was suffered to lapse by Iyetsuna, the fourth *Shogun*. But the presence of the nobles themselves was another matter. Not merely were they thus brought into constant contact with the head of the administration, through whose grace they held their fiefs; not merely did their attendance in Yedo constitute a sign of their allegiance, — a sign that could be unerringly interpreted, — but Yedo itself became their capital. There they had to take their places and preserve their state among their peers, and the magnificent mansions that they were induced, by a spirit of rivalry, to build, the brilliant equipages that they supported and the costly habits that they cultivated, not only served as a wholesome drain on their resources, but also occupied their attention to the exclusion of politics and other dangerous topics. It was, indeed, a part of the Tokugawa chieftain's plan that the accumulation of wealth in the coffers of individuals should be carefully prevented. In his instructions for the guidance of his successors he laid down the principle that, whenever the opulence of any noble began to attract attention, the task of carrying out some great public work should be imposed upon him.

This book does not aim at tracing the history of Japan. The task has been essayed already by more than one European or American writer, and achieved perhaps as successfully as is possible without research too profound to be within the capacity of any authors not perfectly familiar with the ideographic script, and too extensive to be undertaken without co-op-

erative effort. If the system of the Tokugawa chief has been set down here in some detail, it is because, in the first place, some idea of the structure of Japan's polity during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is essential to a clear conception of her modern metamorphosis; and because, in the second, we have in this story an effective refutation of one of the most injurious charges brought against the Japanese by certain foreign critics—the charge that they are without any endowment of organizing faculty. A nation's ethnographic index is its history. There alone can we hope to find trustworthy definitions of its people's character and capacities. A stranger who visited Japan in the early Tokugawa days, and who, through bewildering mists of racial prejudice and conservative bias, surveyed the narrow vista of Japanese men and Japanese things falling within the range of his vision, could no more have understood than he could have conceived and elaborated the system that Ieyasu had just inaugurated. To him the empire would have presented itself as an unstable mob of principalities, each practically independent of the other, and none linked to the Shogunate in Yedo by any bonds of allegiance other than those that the latter's military supremacy could forge and maintain. He would not have detected the delicate yet tough meshes of the net that Ieyasu had thrown over this congeries of clashing elements and conflicting ambitions. Before everything the absence of a centralizing organization would have forced itself upon his attention. But we of later generations, who see with larger eyes, who have access to the pages of the *Bukke Hatto*, the *Kinchu Komoku* and other documents not open to common scrutiny in the seventeenth century, can appreciate the wonderful organization that survived the vicissitudes of two hundred and sixty-seven years, and held in submission, concord and tranquillity elements constitutionally and traditionally addicted to rebellion, conflict and disruption.

In appraising the debt that Japan owes to the Tokugawa Shogunate, we find that Ieyasu was not by any means the sole creditor. Iyemitsu, the third *Shogun* of the line, Tsunayoshi, the fifth, Yoshimune, the eighth, and Iyenari, the eleventh, were all rulers of



BRONZE DAIBUTSU IN UENO PARK, TOKYO.

Constructed in 1660. Height, 21½ feet. Interesting as an antiquity, but inferior as a work of art.

conspicuous ability. Upon Iyemitsu devolved the task of putting into full operation the system devised by his grandfather and partially carried out by his father. He brought to the work such energy and talent that history sometimes credits him with being an originator rather than an executor. Tsunayoshi distinguished himself as a patron of literature, though his amours and his extravagance darken the record of his days. Yoshimune stands out amid the growing sensuality and effeminacy of over-peaceful times, a salient type of the ideal *Samurai*, frugal, chivalrous, martial and practical. Iyenari, during a rule of fifty years, carried the system of Ieyasu to its acme of efficiency, and received from the Emperor the highest distinction ever bestowed on a *Shogun* while in office. He died in 1838. Twenty-nine years later the last of the Shoguns abdicated, and the organization that they had controlled through fourteen generations crumbled away with scarcely a symptom of catastrophe. Never did an edifice so massive, so closely compacted and so venerable fall with so little fracas or resistance. It is with the causes and instruments of its overthrow that we have now to concern ourselves. Two have already been foreshadowed: the impaired majesty of the Emperor in Kyoto and the untamed might of the two great southern clans, Satsuma and Choshu. These were domestic factors of disturbance. The third factor was foreign.

It has been customary to apply the epithet "anti-foreign" to the Japanese of ancient and mediæval times. "Anti-Christian" would be the proper term. To foreigners, merely in the character of aliens, the Japanese never showed hostility. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." Militant Christianity opened intercourse between Japan and the Occident. Militant Christianity rendered intercourse intolerable. But that is a comparatively modern story. Before we relate it, let us look back, for a moment, to remoter eras, the eras when Japan knew nothing of the Occident, and when her intercourse with peoples beyond her own borders was wholly that of Oriental with Oriental.

Two routes for that intercourse offered themselves: one northward by Yezo, the Kuriles and Saghalien to the Ainu district and Manchuria; the other westward to China by Korea. The former, apart from the natural difficulties that it presented, was blocked by hostile aboriginal tribes and led to regions offering no inducements for trader or student. The latter, comparatively easy of access, led to the portals of the Middle Kingdom, the greatest of Eastern empires, the centre of enlightenment and power. It was by way of Korea, therefore, that Japan came into touch with the Asiatic continent, and, pending her contact with Europe and America, it was by way of Korea that she received whatever moral and national civilization the Asiatic continent could furnish. China was the origin of that civilization, and to Chinese annals — annals that had been regularly compiled for centuries before the art of writing became known in Japan — to Chinese annals we have to look for any trustworthy record of those early days.

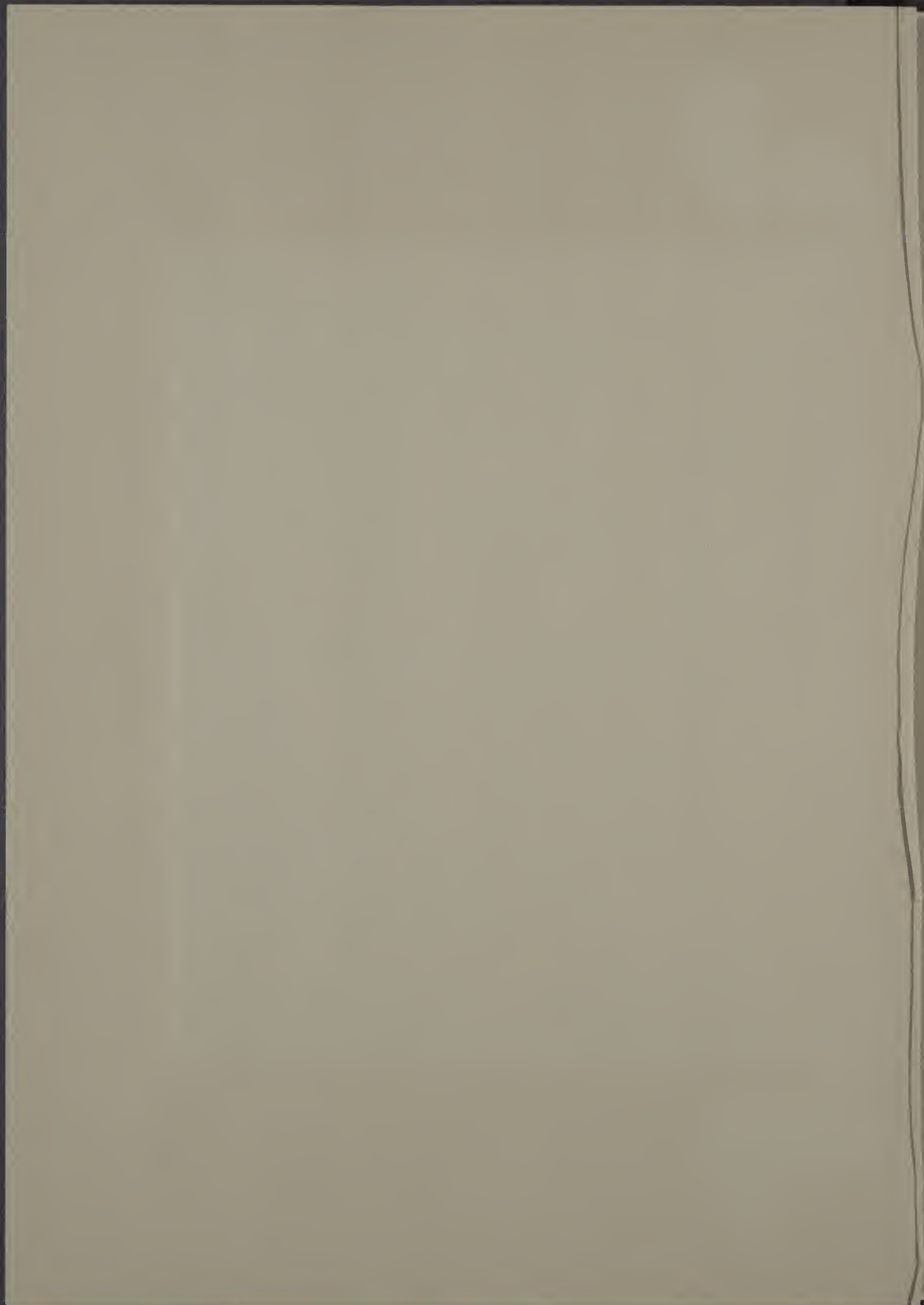
At the opening of the Christian era Japan was known in China under the name of

INTERIOR OF NOBLEMAN'S PALACE.

The Japanese home, whether occupied by the wealthy or the poorer class, is entirely destitute of furniture. There are no tables, chairs, pianos, cabinets or bric-a-brac in the living rooms, and no bedsteads, bureaus or wash-stands in the chambers. In short, all the rooms are absolutely bare and unfurnished. The inhabitants sit, eat and sleep on the floor. The bedding, which consists of quilts and wooden blocks for pillows, is kept during the day in wall cupboards screened by paper slides and at night spread upon the floor. Nevertheless, the painted screens, elaborate wood carvings and exquisite finish of all the woodwork, give the house a very refined and artistic appearance, and except for purposes of utility, modern furnishings would seem superfluous.







Wo. Scholars have never determined to their entire satisfaction whence this term *Wo* originated. The ideograph employed in writing it signified "yielding," or "subdued," and when the Japanese learned to interpret ideographs they objected to the name. The point may seem trivial. Yet it has special interest. For, according to Chinese records, it was subsequently to the year 671 A. D. that the Japanese repudiated the term. An embassy was sent by them in that year to congratulate the Emperor of China on a recent conquest, and thereafter their growing knowledge of the ideographic script induced them to change the name of their country to *Nippon* (Chinese *Jihpèn*), or the land of the rising sun. It appears scarcely fair to infer from this record, as some scholars have inferred, that Japan had no written annals prior to the end of the seventh century. Having enjoyed tolerably frequent intercourse with China from the year 238 A. D., she cannot be supposed to have remained entirely without knowledge of the ideographic script. It is true, as we have already seen, that the most ancient written annals possessed by Japan, namely, the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon-gi*, date from 711 A. D. and 720 A. D., respectively. But it is also true that, if the Japanese were sufficiently intimate with the course of events on the Asiatic continent to take international note of an incident like a victory achieved in Manchuria by the Emperor of China, they must have had some familiarity with the products of Chinese civilization. The exact degree of their familiarity will probably remain forever obscure; but reason forbids us to suppose that over four centuries of

intercourse could have failed to teach them anything of the most useful lesson that China had to impart. It is certain, however, that they did not make very intelligent or accurate use of the knowledge possessed by them. They failed to appreciate the value of contemporary history until the eighth century, and they then set themselves to man-

ufacture annals which, whatever nucleus of fact or fragments of ancient belief they embody, must be ranked rather with the legendary ethnology of the Celts and Gaels than with sober recitals of actual events. In truth there is more than a fanciful analogy between the Dé Danann, the invading deities of Irish tradition, and the semi-mortal divinities of Japa-



TORII AT MIYAJIMA.

The temple of Miyajima enjoys great celebrity. The torii in front of it, which stands in the sea, is a favorite motive of Japanese art.

nese mythology; between Ogma, of the sun-like face, and Izanagi, from whose eye the goddess of the orb issued; between Neit, the deity of battle, and Susa-no-o, the impetuous divinity; between Ana, the mother of fire (Aed), and Izanami, who died in giving birth to that indispensable element. It is a pity to be compelled to relegate such large sections of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihon-gi* to the ranks of myth and fable. The invasion of Korea by the Empress Jingo, for example, contains so much of the picturesque and the romantic that the coldest critic feels a pang of remorse as he draws his pen through the story. The good old chroniclers were so naïve and yet so artful. Consider the omen that they imagined for the warlike lady's guidance. She went fishing for trout; heaven prospered her sport, and thenceforth to all time only a female angler could tempt the fish in that river of Matura. Consider, too, her speech to her troops as, battle-axe in hand, she stood within their three-sided formation on the Hizen coast:—"If the drums are beaten out of time and the signal-flags waved confusedly, order cannot be preserved in the army. Too eager a desire for booty will lead to your being taken prisoners. Despise not the enemy though his numbers may be few; shrink not from him though his numbers be many. Spare not the violent; slay not the submissive. The victors shall surely be rewarded, sooner or later; those that run away shall surely be punished."¹ Was ever address more practical, pithy and pregnant delivered to soldiers on the eve of battle? Then we have a gentle deity and a fierce deity accompanying the expedition, the former to protect the Empress, the latter to lead the flotilla; we have a tide-wave that carries the ships across the sea and, sweeping inland, terrifies the King of Korea into unresisting surrender; we have the prudent monarch swearing a poetical oath that his allegiance to his conqueror shall last until the sun rises in the west and sets in the east; until the stream of the Amnok flows backward to its source, and until the pebbles from its bed ascend to the sky and become stars; and we have the Empress setting up at the King's gate her staff and spear, to stand there for five centuries. Alas! the whole tale must be blotted out. It abounds with inherent evidences of fiction, and when stripped of its patriotic embroidery, offers no tangible remnant except the bare hypothesis either that an embassy despatched by the Empress via Korea to the Chinese Court, which event certainly took place, was magnified by tradition into a warlike expedition against Korea; or that the writers of the *Nihon-gi*, as uncertain of their chronology as they were of their facts, combined, into one grand and brilliant operation various comparatively insignificant raids made at later eras upon the coasts of Korea by Japanese adventurers. Much scholarship has been devoted in modern times to the elucidation of the history of Japan, China and Korea during the centuries immediately preceding and immediately succeeding the commencement of the Christian era, and much patience is needed to thread an intelligent path through the maze of evidence that these erudite sinologues have collected from sources difficult of access. But, after all, we are really interested in discovering two things only: first, of what nature were Japan's

¹ Aston: "Early Japanese History."

relations with the Asiatic continent in those eras; and, secondly, of what nature was the civilization that she found there. As to the former question, there is abundant testimony to show that the Japanese, partly by military prowess and partly by friendly persuasion, established themselves, virtually as conquerors, in the southwestern section of Korea at a very early date, probably as early as the second century of the Christian era. Thence they made repeated raids upon the southeastern section, and though the measure of success achieved by them is uncertain, there can be no doubt about the fact that the spirit of foreign conquest had already become a potent national influence in Japan. The peninsula of Korea was then divided into three States: Peh-tsi, on the southwest (called Hiakusai or Mimana by the Japanese); Shinra, on the southeast, and Kao-keu-li (afterwards called Kao-li or Ko-li), on the north. We have no concern with the story of these States' antecedents, but the habits and customs of the people that inhabited them are worth a moment's attention, in view of the heavy debt that Japanese civilization is generally supposed to owe to Korea. Chinese annals are here our guide. From them we learn that the people of northern Korea, in the first century of our era, were strong and hardy, of honest disposition, and not disposed to plunder or harry their neighbors. Their towns were surrounded by stockades, and they had palaces, granaries, stores and prisons. For arms they used bows and arrows, swords and spears; in eating and drinking they had dishes and platters, and at meals they observed canons of polite etiquette.

In the closing month of the year they held a great festival in reverence of heaven: feasting, singing and dancing went on for several days. This was called "worshipping the Dawn." While the festival was in progress, the criminal courts did not sit, and prisoners were released. Before engaging in war, they addressed supplications to



THEATRE STREET IN YOKOHAMA.

This street is used as a sort of permanent fair, hence the decorations. One of the principal Japanese theatres is located on this thoroughfare.

heaven, and drew divinations from the hoof of a sacrificial ox. In travelling they made no distinction between day and night, and they had such a love of singing and humming that the sound of their voices was incessant. Prompt and severe in punishing crime, they reduced to the rank of slaves the males and females of an offender's family; compelled

robbers to make twelvefold atonement; put to death men and women convicted of immorality; visited wifely unchastity with the heaviest penalties; and exposed the corpses of persons executed for crime. If an elder brother died, his wife was married by his younger brother. The dead were enclosed in single coffins for interment, and at the obsequies of



SIX-ANGLED TEMPLE IN KYOTO.

great folk people were often buried alive, as many as a hundred at a time, homicides being reserved for that fate. The King's remains were put into a jade casket; so, at least, we read, though it is plain that unless the cremated ashes alone were thus treated, a jade receptacle sufficiently large would have been out of the question. It appears, also, that his Majesty

had an engraved seal, and that when officials were sent on missions they wore embroidered wrappers and had ornaments of gold and silver about their waists. This description applies to one only of the tribes inhabiting the Korean peninsula eighteen centuries ago. Of another tribe dwelling a little farther south the record says that the residences of their high officials were marked by standards; that they had masters of ceremonies, and officers charged with the duty of receiving state guests and superintending the stores of cloth; that they were cleanly in their habits but licentious; that they organized dancing and singing parties in the evening and at night; that they sacrificed to supernatural beings, the gods of the land, and to the stars, and that they held a great festival, called the "eastern league," in honor of heaven, in the tenth month, when, also, they made pilgrimages to a sacred cave in the east of their country; that on occasions of public meeting they wore garments of embroidered silk with ornaments of gold and silver, and that their superintendent of the cloth-stores and their treasurer carried on their heads a hat-hood without a back, junior officers of the same class wearing pointed caps of soft material. Unlike the tribe spoken of above, these Koreans had no prisons; they did not burden the State with the support of criminals, but killed them offhand after due trial, making slaves of their wives and children. A bridegroom always went to live at the house of the bride, giving himself no concern to provide a home until a child was born and had attained to full growth. Funerals were conducted with much pomp, a profusion of

gold, silver and other valuables being employed, and over the grave a large tumulus was raised and planted with fir and cypress. As for the disposition of the people, they were said to be bold, strong, fierce, impetuous, inured to fighting and addicted to plundering forays.

It is impossible to read these descriptions without recognizing the origin, or, at any rate, the counterparts, of many customs to which no student of mediæval or even modern Japan is a stranger. Later on, that is to say, toward the end of the eleventh century, evidences of further progress in artistic manufacture are recorded. A Chinese review of art during the period 1074-1167 speaks of "graceful willow-leaf fans made in Kao-li, with such curious graining that the poets of the day were much exercised to account for the material;" of "wonderful cushions, or mattresses, made of hair," or fur; and of "excellent guitars, having frames of snake-skin and beechwood, ivory keys, and the king's portrait painted on them." We have no proof that close intercourse, whether amicable or enforced, existed in the early era between Japan and the Koreans in the north of the peninsula; but, on the other hand, it is probable that Japanese embassies, *en route* for the Chinese Court, passed, from time to time, right through Korea and, crossing the Yalu, made their way along the high-road via modern Newchwang to the frontier of the Middle Kingdom. In their necessarily slow progress these officials must have become familiar with whatever elements of refinement and civilization were to be observed in the countries through which they passed.

Turning to the northeast of the peninsula, we find people described as simple, straightforward, bold, stalwart, skilled in the use of the spear and in fighting on foot, people whose costume, mode of life and manner of eating resembled those of the second tribe described above. They buried their dead in large sepulchres as much as a hundred feet



TUB-MAKER.

long, lined with wood and having an opening at one end only. After time had reduced the corpse to a skeleton, the bones were collected and placed in a shell, all the members of a family having one shell in common. Memorial tablets of carved wood were erected. The section of this tribe that inhabited the region bordering the Yalu River seems to have led an

uneasy existence, for the piratical raids of their neighbors from the opposite shore often compelled them to hide in mountain caves throughout the summer.

On the same eastern shore of the peninsula, but living further south, were people who, since the twelfth century before the Christian era, had enjoyed the benefit of Chinese administrative, agricultural and industrial instruction. They were familiar with forms of etiquette; with principles of justice; with tillage; with sericulture; and with the "eight fundamental laws." They never robbed each other. Their houses had no doors, nor their windows shutters. Their women were chaste and faithful. They used dishes and platters for eating. There were no beggars. An article of dress common to both sexes was a frilled collar. They venerated the mountains and streams as landmarks to be held always sacred. People of the same family name did not intermarry. When any one fell sick or died in a house, it was abandoned and another residence constructed. They knew how to cultivate hemp and could weave fabrics. They studied the stars, and by the signs thus obtained they predicted the nature of the harvest. Trespasses by one community on the lands of another were punished by fines of slaves or cattle. A life had to be given for a life. Heaven was worshipped in the tenth month, with wine-drinking, dancing and singing by day and night. The tiger also was worshipped as a spirit. They fought stoutly. From their land came the celebrated "sandal bows of Loh-lang," and they were renowned for the use of spears some thirty feet long, wielded by the combined strength of several men. These were the inhabitants of Shinra, known in Japan as Shiragi, people against whom, as we shall presently see, the Japanese frequently measured their strength.

We come, finally, to the southwestern district of the Korean peninsula—Peh-tsi, the Hiakusai, Mimana or Kudara of the Japanese. Here, too, Chinese settlers inspired the civilization of the seventy-eight communities inhabiting the region. Indeed the name "Hiyakusai" was derived from the fact that a number of Chinese nobles—traditionally put at a hundred (*hiaku*)—accompanied a fugitive prince thither in the beginning of the first century. This was the region with which Japan had most frequent intercourse. Its people, according to Chinese records compiled during the first two centuries of the Christian era, understood how to till the ground, rear silkworms and weave cloth. They produced chestnuts "as large as pears," and had fowls with tails five feet long. They were not nomads, but did not live in cities. Their houses were of mud, shaped like a tumulus, with a door at the top. They lacked refinement; did not kneel in token of obeisance; drew no distinctions of age or sex in matters of etiquette; attached no value to gold, jewels, embroidery or rugs; did not ride on horses or oxen; used pebbles and pearls for tricking out their garments and for necklaces and eardrops; wore cloth robes and straw sandals, but no head covering except coiled chignons; were robust and brave, "and the young men when exerting themselves to build a house, would take a rope, run it through the skin of the back, and trail a log by it, amid cheers for their sturdiness." After planting the crops in the fifth month, and after reaping

¹ These details are taken from Parker's translation of the *Han-shu*.

A TEA-HOUSE RESTAURANT IN KYOTO.

The ordinary tea-house furnishes only slight refreshment to the wayfarer, but a variety of special lines of business are occasionally associated with the tea-house. Thus every little railway station has its tea-house which undertakes to purchase the traveller's ticket and check his baggage. Tea-houses serve as ticket agencies for the Tokyo theatres, practically preventing patrons from dealing direct with the box office. The larger tea-houses provide for the entertainment of their patrons in many ways, arranging for banquets, singing, dancing, etc., etc.







them in the tenth, festivals were held in honor of the deities, the feasting, drinking, dances and songs lasting throughout the night, dozens of men marking the cadence of the music with their feet. Each community had a "heaven prince" to direct its festivals. There was a sanctuary for offenders, at which a pole stood, and from it were suspended a bell and drum for worshipping the spirits. The houses stood in stockaded enclosures; the people rode in carts drawn by horses or oxen; had proper marriage ceremonies; made way for each other on the road; used iron as a medium of exchange; were fond of singing, dancing and drumming, and used to flatten their children's heads by pressing them with stones. Each community had its own head-man. It is added that the southern shore of this district being near Japan, some of the people tattooed their bodies. Habits and customs differing more or less from the above are attributed to a few tribes living in the same district, but they need not be detailed here, as they find their counterpart in other regions of the peninsula, and are consequently included in the references already made to the northern and eastern sections.



DRY GOODS SHOP.

A small establishment of the cheaper class.

What a debt we owe to these Chinese annalists; these patient, matter-of-fact, minute annalists, who find nothing too trivial to be recorded, and who seem to have possessed an intuitive appreciation of the value that future generations would attach to their labors! And what a debt we owe to the ideographic script also! A clumsy, uncivilized form of writing it is called by folks that enjoy the convenience of an alphabet; a form of writing that develops the mechanics of memory at the expense of the intellectual and ideal faculties, and cruelly handicaps far-eastern peoples in the race for knowledge. That is all very true, but there is one signal benefit standing to the credit of the ideographs: the terrible toil of acquiring them and using them makes their script so precious in Chinese eyes that to destroy a page of written matter has always been deemed a sacrilege. How much has that fact contributed to the preservation of the Middle Kingdom's annals? As to their accuracy, there is necessarily room for scepticism. But in this particular context we may make a slight digression, not merely for the sake of establishing the credit of the historians quoted above, but also to throw addi-

tional light on a subject discussed in a previous chapter. Inhabiting, in remote ages, a part of eastern Asia now identified as the modern Kirin and the Russian promontory of Primorsk, was a tribe called the Yih-lou, declared by ethnologists to be the ancestors of the Manchus. If there be any solid ground for the theory which regards northwestern Asia as the *provenance* of the pit-dwelling autochthons whom the Ainu, driven northward from Japan proper by the invading Malays and Mongolians, found in Yezo and the Kuriles, then surely these primeval Manchus, the Yih-lou, ought to have some connection with the matter, for from the shores of the Primorsk promontory they could look across to the most northerly part of the chain of islands having Nippon for its central and principal link. Let us hear, then, what the same Chinese historians say about the Yih-lou: "They had the five cereals and hempen cloth. They produced red jade and fine sables. They had not a supreme head, but every settlement had its chieftain, residing among the hills and forests. The climate was exceedingly cold, and they always inhabited holes dug in the ground, the depth marking status in the occupant; great families having as many as nine connecting ladders. They were fond of breeding swine, eating their flesh and using their skins as clothes. In winter they all smeared themselves with swine fat to a thickness of several lines, so as to keep off the wind and cold, but in summer they went naked, all but a foot of cloth covering before and behind. They were abominably stinking and dirty. Most of them were courageous and robust, and lived in inaccessible mountains. They were excellent bowmen, and could make sure of hitting a man's eye. Their bows were four feet long, and as strong as a crossbow. They used buckthorn for their arrows, making them 1.8 feet long, tipping them with green stone, and poisoning them so that instant death resulted from being struck. They were hardy boatmen, and fond of freebooting raids, so that the neighboring States, while repelling their attacks, were never able to bring them under control. They used neither bowls nor platters for eating and drinking, and their laws and customs were without system to the utmost degree."¹ Here, beyond any shadow of reasonable doubt, are the Koro-pok-guru, or cave-dwellers of Ezo and the Kuriles, whose pit-homes may still be seen in the northern islands of the Japanese chain. The Chinese historian brings us face to face with a people whom we immediately recognize, though they are no longer identifiable by comparison with their modern descendants. Even upon a trace of the Ainu we light in the records of these conscientious annalists, for we are told that in the year 701 A. D. an envoy from Shinra, *en route* for China, was carried out of his course by a storm, and, drifting to "Long-Beard Island," married a princess who "had several scores of hairs on her chin." It is possible, therefore, to be tolerably certain about the kind of peoples that the Japanese found in the Korean peninsula when they crossed over to it nineteen hundred years ago. And that they repeatedly made the voyage there cannot be the slightest doubt. The Empress Jingo's expedition and its signal results must, indeed, be dismissed as myths, but an examination of Chinese and Korean records shows that, from

¹"The Manchu Tribes on the Korean Frontier;" Parker in the "Proceedings of the Asiatic Society."

fifty years before the Christian era until six and a half centuries after it, Japanese military expeditions or Japanese peaceful embassies repeatedly passed over to the peninsula; that the southwestern district, Peh-tsi, or Kudara, as the Japanese called it, was virtually under the control of the hardy invaders, and that they endeavored again and again, but without signal success, to extend their "sphere of influence" to Shinra, on the southeastern coast. Against the northern district, Kao-keu-li or Kao-li, they do not appear to have undertaken anything serious, and assuredly they never established any strong footing there. That they claimed, however, to have conquered the whole peninsula is attested by contemporary annals — annals compiled not by the Japanese themselves, but by the Chinese.

China, it must be premised, had already begun to assume, in those remote eras, the position of lofty superiority from which the force of events in modern times has so ruthlessly ousted her. She was rapidly learning to regard herself as the centre of the universe, the fountain of majesty and might. Hence the construction that she put upon the visits of embassies from countries beyond her borders was distinctly subjective. To her such acts on the part of her neighbors were evidences of vassalage, tributes to her own indisputable supremacy; whereas, by the States whose envoys travelled to her court, no purpose was entertained except to secure immunity from the aggressive forays which in early ages every Oriental nation, and, for the matter of that, every Occidental also, organized without scruple against adjacent countries whenever the lust of conquest or of plunder overtook it. Tested by the unromantic logic of nineteenth-century international law, these pretensions of China's have proved as unsubstantial as the basis upon which they originally rested. She herself, indeed, when confronted by the inconvenient responsibilities devolving upon a suzerain



MOTHER AND CHILD.

according to European handbooks of diplomacy, has not hesitated to descend from her pedestal in the clouds and to describe these visits of gift-bearing ambassadors as "simple interchanges of friendly courtesy." But her ancient annalists, not foreseeing the rudely practical tendencies of future ages, classed all envoys as tribute-bearers and their countries as

vassal States, in a moral if not in a material sense. A correction on that account must be applied constantly to their records. Thus, when (238 A. D.) the third Japanese embassy reached the Chinese capital, it is spoken of as having begged permission from the ruler of northwestern Korea to proceed to the Emperor's court for the purpose of paying respect and offering duty. It was an embassy from the Empress Jingo. Why did she send it? A hundred and twenty-eight years previously the northwestern part of Korea had been overrun by Chinese forces and divided into four districts, each under the government of a Chinese Marquess. But between that date and the despatch of Jingo's envoys there had been no fresh display of Chinese prowess in southeastern Manchuria. The explanation is to be sought in Japan's internal conditions. From the middle to the close of the second century civil war prevailed without intermission. Twice in earlier time—namely, in 57 A. D. and 107 A. D.—envoys from Japan had visited the Chinese Court. On the first occasion they received from the ruler of China a gold seal and a ribbon. On the second occasion they presented a hundred and sixty "living persons." Probably these neighborly demonstrations were unavoidably interrupted by domestic disturbances in Japan, and were renewed by the Empress Jingo so soon as her attention could be diverted to foreign affairs. It is a pity that we know so little of this remarkable woman. Chinese historians say that she was old and unmarried at the time of the coming of her envoys; that she possessed skill in magic arts by which she deluded her people; that she had a thousand female attendants, but suffered no man to see her face except one official who served her meals and acted as a means of communication with her subjects; that she dwelt in a palace with lofty pavilions surrounded by a stockade and guarded by soldiers. Did she, then, owe nothing to the graces that have elsewhere rendered female sway endurable? It is a hopeless task to disinter her real personality from the dust of ages and the overgrowth of myths and traditions. We shall presently see what account the Chinese had to give of her nation and its customs. Here, however, reverting to the subject of Japan and Korea, we note that time and again—how often there are no means of accurately determining—Japanese expeditions had been directed against Korea previously to Jingo's reign, and that during the third and fourth centuries not only was Japan's influence paramount in the southwest of the peninsula, but the weight of her hand had been frequently felt in the southeast also. A measure of the position she had gained for herself is afforded by the Chinese annals of 421 A. D., where an envoy from Japan describes his sovereign as "commissioner and general administrator" of the military affairs of six Korean States, including Shinra. This title was not fully recognized by the Chinese Emperor. But the Japanese do not appear to have been much concerned about his Celestial Majesty's severely accurate condescension. Twenty-two years later (443 A. D.) they sent another envoy, who adopted the same style for his master, and yet again and again at comparatively brief intervals the ceremony was repeated, China always extending practical, if partial, recognition to the titles thus advanced. One of these embassies (478 A. D.) is specially noteworthy.

We have a transcript, professing to be verbatim, of the message carried by the ambassador from his sovereign: "From ancient times until now my ancestors have girded on their armor and travelled, regardless of ease and comfort, over hill and valley to the conquest of fifty-five States of hairy men in the East, and the subduing of sixty-six States of miscellaneous barbarians in the West. They have conquered ninety-five States north of the sea. The blessings of civilization have been spread. The country has been enlarged in every direction. Successive generations of royal ancestors have been free from unpropitious years. They passed through Peh-tsi [the southwestern section of Korea] and equipped their boats. But Kao-Keu-li [the northern section of Korea], destitute of principle, was covetous of annexing it. . . . I am about to raise a great army to defeat that enterprise. . . . I have ventured to borrow the princely style with rights equivalent to those of the three Sz. I



PLOUGHING A RICE FIELD.

The rice plantations are prepared in the spring-time by ploughing the field while it is covered with water introduced by a system of irrigation.

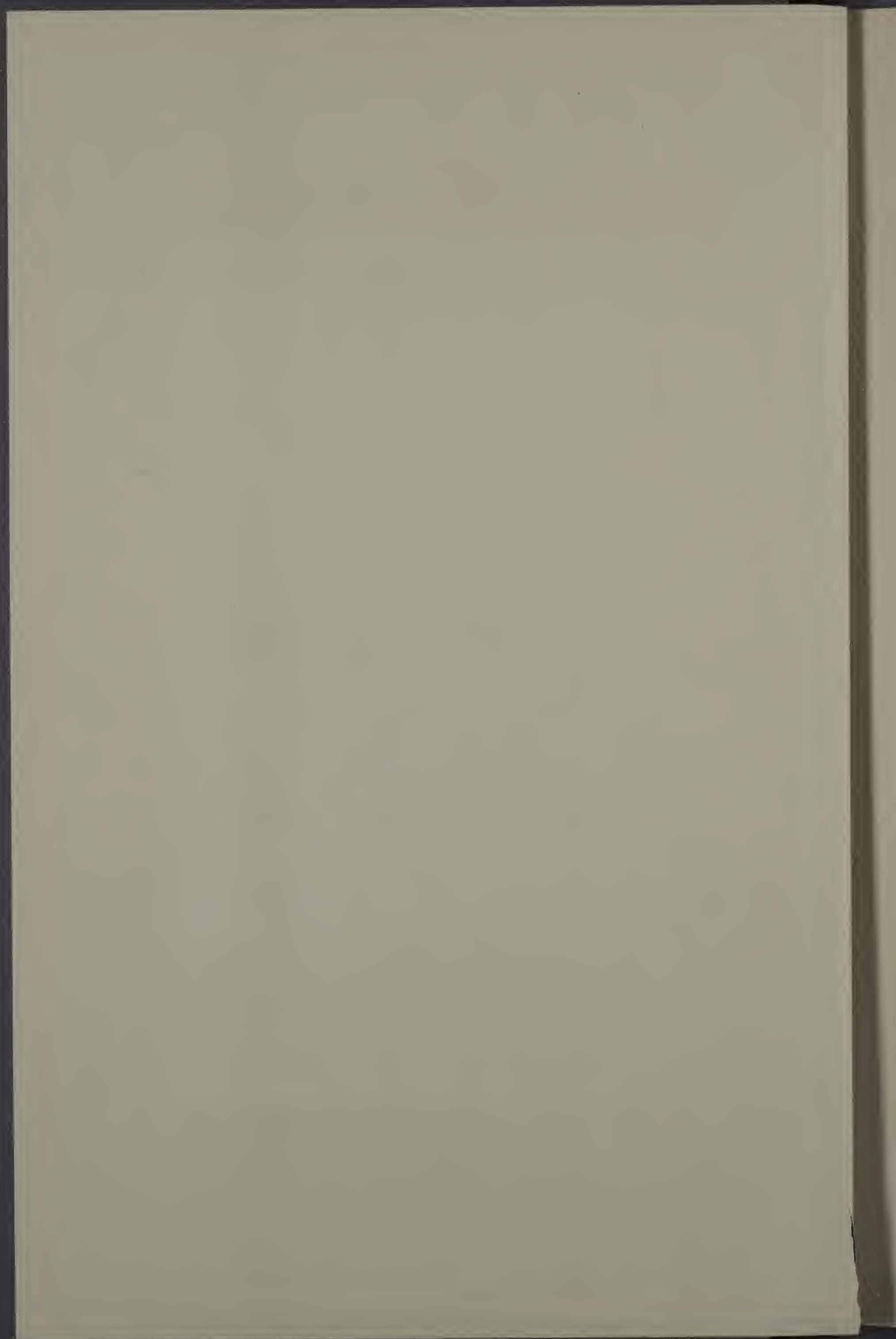
am also fain to borrow all the rest with a view to stimulate my loyalty."¹ The "rights" here referred to are briefly those of supreme rule. There can be little question that the message from Japan was committed to writing by a Chinese scribe, and we are consequently forbidden to draw any hard-and-fast deductions from the forms of speech employed. But that China now admitted the validity of the titles claimed, including the appellation "commissioner and general in military charge of the six Korean States," and that she confirmed them by imperial manifesto, seem to be historical facts. Probably the Japanese knew nothing of this manifesto, nor had contemplated anything of the kind. It was simply China's method of building up, with purely subjective materials, the edifice of suzerainty that ultimately assumed such colossal dimensions and, how-

¹ "Ma Twan-lin's Account of Japan." Translated by Parker.

ever shadowy in fact, contributed not a little in theory to the stability of the Middle Kingdom's throne. We need not pursue these details. The general fact is sufficient, namely, that in the early centuries of our era Japan was strong enough to impose her yoke upon a considerable section of Korea. But she did not prove strong enough to keep it there. Unable to make head against reprisals undertaken by the neighboring State of Shinra, the Japanese officials, who either administered the affairs of Peh-tsi or held high office in the administration, were obliged to fly over sea. That happened in the year 562 A. D., according to Japanese annals, when Kimmei sat on the throne of Japan. Peh-tsi, from which his people had been expelled, seems to have been regarded by this emperor as Calais was regarded by ten generations of mediæval Englishmen. With his dying breath he enjoined upon his successor the duty of recovering the lost dominion. Is it imaginable that the Japanese of so remote an epoch perceived, as their descendants sixteen centuries later were destined to perceive, that their national integrity depended upon adopting such measures as should prevent the Korean peninsula's becoming a stepping-stone in the southward progress of an aggressive continental power; or were they moved by warlike impulses only? At all events, Kimmei's last injunctions were not neglected. His immediate successor struck a strong blow to reinstate Japanese authority in Peh-tsi, but failed. The disaster is traced in dim outlines by his country's historians. They tell us merely that a great expedition was equipped and despatched to the peninsula, but that neither could Peh-tsi be recovered nor Shinra subdued. If, however, the dimensions of the defeat are concealed, the spirit it aroused finds clear expression. Thenceforth the re-conquest of Peh-tsi became a cardinal object of ambition in Japan, and just a hundred years later another army of invasion left the shores of Kiushu. It was convoyed by a hundred vessels of war, and the Emperor himself superintended the preparations. The Koreans, assisted by a strong Chinese force, drove back this Japanese armada, and, moreover, showed such prowess in the struggle that the defeated sovereign definitely resolved to adopt a defensive instead of an offensive policy; to leave Korea to its fate and to establish friendly relations with China. Little children in Japan sing of this Emperor Tenchi as the most benevolent of sovereigns, who, to show his sympathy with his impoverished people, lived in a rude hut through the roof of which the rain beat upon the Imperial head. But to warlike critics in generations nearer to his era his name and that of Mimana (Peh-tsi) sounded as the names of Mr. Gladstone and Majuba Hill sound in the ears of British conservatives to-day. The wisdom of Tenchi's choice is nevertheless easily comprehended. One of the only three dynasties that ever succeeded in extending and maintaining their sway over the whole of China was then firmly seated upon the throne. The *Tang* had come into power at the beginning of the seventh century. Among the most crushing disasters suffered by their immediate predecessors had been a defeat at the hands of the northern Koreans of Kao-li. Out of a host of over three hundred thousand Chinese braves that marched through southern Manchuria to the conquest of the peninsula, only twenty-

A TOKYO BEAUTY.

The leading geishas of Tokyo competed for prizes to be awarded them for their beauty by the vote of competent native judges. Among the prize winners the lady whose picture is here given, secured well-deserved preëminence.







seven thousand recrossed the Liao River in their homeward flight. The *Tang* rulers determined to crush the formidable enemy by whom such a defeat had been inflicted on the Middle Kingdom under the sway of the Sui. They sent an immense host, partly over sea from Chefoo, partly by the great military road through Newchwang and along the northern littoral of the Yellow Sea. Ostensibly, the purpose of the expedition was to aid Shinra against Kao-li and Peh-tsi. In reality, it was destined to reduce Korea to the status of a Chinese dependency. The invaders were completely successful. The King of Shinra became Chinese Viceroy of the peninsula and of southeastern Manchuria. Against such an enemy as China under the *Tang*, Japan, already weakened by rivalry among her leading nobles, and just then entering upon the long series of intrigues and internecine struggles that attended the growth of a military feudalism, could not hope to contend successfully. Tenchi's decision was a necessity rather than a choice, and more than nine centuries were destined to elapse before any strong effort could be made to reverse it.

The interest of these early relations between Japan and Korea is not simply ethnographical or historical; it is political also. The Korean peninsula occupied Japan's attention during the first seven centuries of her authenticated existence as a nation; it occupied her attention so soon as ever her military strength became available, in the hands of the *Taiko*, for some purpose other than the quelling of domestic feuds; it occupied her attention when she entered upon her career of modern progress; it occupies her attention to-day. Destiny seems to have decreed that she shall not rule the problem out of her national life. If we would trace her probable path in the future, we must look for prominent landmarks along the track that she has trodden in the past,—and Korea is the most prominent of them all.



THE SLEEPING CAT AT NIKKO.

In the mortuary chapel of Ieyasu; by Japan's greatest wood carver, Jingoro, nicknamed Hidari because he worked with his left hand.

V.

JAPAN'S DEBT TO CONTINENTAL NEIGHBORS IN EARLY ERAS.



HE continuous despatch of friendly missions from Japan to the Chinese Court in very early times is certainly a notable feature of her history. Toward her other neighbor, Korea, she displayed, as we have seen, a very different disposition, establishing herself as a conqueror in one section of the peninsula, and attacking with persistent vehemence the section that she could not subdue. No less than twenty-five times during the first five centuries of the Christian era we find her forces raiding the coasts or besieging the cities of Shinra, and though some of these warlike essays were probably mere raids, others assumed the dimensions of national efforts.

One deserves independent reference as illustrating the spirit of the Japanese people at the time when they first appear on the stage of credible history. In the two hundred and forty-ninth year before the Christian era, a Shinra statesman, speaking in the presence of a Japanese envoy, used insulting language about the latter's sovereign. An invasion of Shinra promptly ensued. The indiscreet official surrendered himself to the invaders, hoping to avert the sufferings of war from his country; but the Japanese burned him, and then laid siege to the capital of Shinra. Korean annals, not Japanese, contain the story. It may have been distorted in the telling, but we are at least justified in inferring from it that any slight toward their sovereign provoked the Japanese of that era to fierce resentment. Such a disposition has been common in all ages to independent tribes or nations, but not to tribes or nations that habitually despatched of their own free volition embassies of amity to courts beyond the seas. The Chinese have never invaded Japan, nor ever betrayed any disposition to molest her. In the complete absence of tangible exhibitions of military prowess, which were the only universally recognized passports to international respect two thousand years ago, the homage that China received from her island neighbor bears eloquent testimony to the position she held in the East. The burning of the Korean patriot and the siege of his country's capital preceded by less than fifty years the rise of the Han Dynasty in China and the completion of those magnificent engineering works at the Shensi metropolis that still excite the world's wonder. In everything that makes for national greatness China towered gigantic above the heads of all other far-eastern States in the era of which we write, and if she construed their embassies as tokens of vassalage, such an interpretation was certainly not without some warrant from her point of view, whatever violence it

may have done to the intentions of her neighbors. What we have to note, however, is that Japan's first despatch of envoys was purely voluntary: China had not suggested the step, nor shown any disposition to resent Japan's isolation. In fact, it does not appear that the people of the Middle Kingdom had very clear ideas about Japan's condition, or even her existence, until a time that may be called mediæval when compared with the antiquity of their own annals. One of the least romantic of sinologues has declared that Chinese history cannot be regarded as trustworthy when it treats of events prior to the ninth century before Christ. Such an age is surely sufficient. The first Japanese embassy was despatched to Loyang (modern Honan) in the year 57 A. D. Therefore China had credible written annals for hundreds of years before her official intercourse with her island neighbor commenced. Did she know anything of Japan previous to that event? The Japanese assign the reign of their first mortal sovereign, Jimmu, to the period from 660 to 585 B. C. His predecessors were heavenly gods or terrestrial semi-divinities; the incidents of their careers, fabulous and supernatural. The first intelligible reference made to the Japanese islands by Chinese annals speaks of them as the abode of genii, the land of immortals possessing the elixir of life. Their inhabitants had a corpse-reviving drug; golden peaches, weighing a pound each; timber of immense strength, yet so buoyant that no superimposed weight would sink it; rare trees; a mountain plant that could be plaited into mats and cushions; mulberries an inch long; and an environment of black sea where the waves, not driven by any wind, rose to a height of a thousand feet. It is more than probable that from these fables, transmitted in the only records containing any reference to prehistoric Japan, the compilers of the *Kojiki* derived the idea of an "age of the gods" and of the Emperor Jimmu's divine ancestry. Why not, indeed? Japanese scholars began to compile records of their country's history at the end of the sixth century of the Christian era. The celebrated *littérateur*, Prince Shotoku, and the equally celebrated patron of Buddhism, Soga-no-Umako, undertook the task. Their unique qualification was familiarity with Chinese ideographic script and with the literature of the Middle Kingdom. Could anything be more natural, more inevitable, than that they should search the pages of that literature for information about the early ages of their nation's existence; or that they should place implicit reliance upon all the information thus acquired? A child when it sits down to transcribe the head-lines of its first copy-book does not think of questioning the logic or morality of the precepts inscribed there. Shotoku and Umako were in the position of children so far as Chinese historical records were concerned. From the annalists of the kingdom at whose civilized feet the whole semi-barbarous world sat they learned that prior to the year 700 B. C. the Japanese islands had been known as the habitation of genii and immortals, and with immortals and genii they faithfully peopled them. Shotoku's compilation was destroyed by fire a few years later, but the conditions under which he and his collaborateur worked had undergone no radical change when, in 712 A. D., O-no-Yasumaro wrote the *Kojiki*. Sinologues have shown that these primitive Japanese

annals contain internal evidence of extensive reliance on Chinese sources. The posthumous names — that is to say, the historical names — given to the forty-two emperors from Jimmu to Mommu (697–708 A. D.) are all constructed on Chinese models; the name “Jimmu” itself is an exact imitation of the title chosen by the *Toba* Tartars for their remote ancestor, and the warlike lady whose alleged invasion of Korea stands out so prominently in Japan’s ancient history was evidently called after the Chinese Empress Wu, whose name and style corresponded with “Jingo.” It does not follow that every event recorded in Japan’s first written annals is to be counted fabulous. Domestic traditions, more or less trustworthy, are doubtless embodied in their pages, as well as reflections of Chinese prehistorical myths. But it does seem a reasonable if not an inevitable conclusion that among many borrowings made by Japan from China, the idea of her “age of gods” has to be included. Can she even claim the credit of having originated her own appellation, or did the Chinese act as god-fathers at her baptism? A strange question, yet a question that has caused no little perplexity to sinologues. It has been already stated that Japan was originally called *Wo*, or *Wa*, by the Chinese; that they wrote the word with an ideograph signifying “submissive,” or “dwarfish,” and that, when the “inwardness” of ideographs became known to the Japanese, they insisted on substituting *Nippon* — the land of the rising sun — for the humiliating *Wo*. These facts rest on the authority of Chinese annals. Yet it has been doubted whether the term *Nippon* did not originate with a Chinese emperor, or whether the name *Wo* was not an ideographic rendering of the appellation given by the Japanese to themselves. To follow such speculations threatens to immerse the inquirer in a maze of perplexities, where guiding clues are hard to clutch. More pertinent is the question how it happens that Occidentals speak of “Japan” and the “Japanese.” There are no “Japanese,” nor is there any “Japan” in the vocabulary of the people of Nippon. “Japan” is a corrupted pronunciation of *Jih-pên*, which, in its turn, is the Chinese manner of sounding the ideographs used in writing *Nippon*. Thus we of the West apply to the island empire of the far East a name incapable of being phonetically identified with the term applied to it by its own inhabitants. To alphabet-users such accidents are difficult to understand. With an alphabet almost any sound can be phonetically transliterated. But with an ideographic script the range of transliterative possibilities is limited to the sounds of the ideographs themselves, and there is always a tendency to invent new names better suited to the resources of such caligraphy. The trouble makes itself felt to this day. No student of modern Japanese literature, reading that an envoy from *Beikoku* concluded a treaty with Japan at Shimoda in 1857, could divine that the United States of America had been one of the high contracting parties on that occasion; nor might it be inferred that, because the leader of Japan’s army in the Manchurian campaign of 1894–5 had studied strategy in a land called *Doitsu*, his knowledge was acquired in Germany. The fact is that, in traversing an ideographic medium, sounds often undergo such wide refraction from the normal as to be no longer accurately recognizable.

We may conclude, without risk of serious error, that from the time when the isles of Japan ceased to be fabulous fields of elysium to the outside world, they were called *Wo* by the Chinese; that to their own inhabitants of that era they were known as *Yamato*, and that, in the seventh century of the Christian era, the Japanese endeavored to have *Nippon* substituted for *Wo* in official communications from China.¹ But we may also conclude with apparently just warrant that the fundamental conception, and probably many of the details, of Japan's "divine age" as well as of her so-called history prior to the third or fourth century of the Christian era were borrowed from the fables or written traditions of her continental neighbors.



PAGODA AT NARA.

Near Sarusawa pond. This pagoda belonged to the Kobukoji temple, founded A. D. 710, burned 1717.

Looking back to the first Japanese embassy from Yamato to Shensi, just eighteen hundred and forty years ago, one speculates with curiosity on the route taken by the envoys and on the manner of making their message intelligible to the Chinese. Did Japanese interpreters act as intermediaries, or was the task performed by Chinese? Probably the latter. Chinese records compiled during the third century of the Christian era (the *Wei Chi*) say that thirty of the *Wo* States were then within interpretorial and ambassadorial reach; a statement which obviously refers to Chinese interpreters. The court at Singan, accustomed to receive envoys from Tartary, from Manchuria, from Korea and from Cochin China, was doubtless furnished with machinery for expounding the various languages and dialects spoken by nations living on the Middle Kingdom's borders. As for the route taken by the envoys, the records do not furnish conclusive information. The evidence, so far as it goes, is in favor of a voyage by water, coasting along the Korean peninsula, the northern littoral of the Yellow Sea, the peninsula of the Regent's Sword and the shores of the Gulf of Petchili—a journey estimated by the annalists at twelve thousand *li*, or four thousand miles. The alternative route in those early days was by the military road from the Yalu

¹ Chinese annals compiled in the second century of the Christian era say: "The *Wo* are southeast of *Han* (the present Korea) and make their dwelling along the mountainous islands in the midst of the ocean. There are over one hundred States. Since the Emperor Wu (110 B. C.) overthrew Chao-sien (northern Korea) over thirty of these States have communicated with North-China by State missions. All these have hereditary rulers whom they style 'King.' The King of Great *Wo* lives at Yemato (Yamato)."

River via the modern Newchwang, but such a journey offered immense difficulties and dangers, and there is no reason to suppose that it was often taken. About the fourth century it became necessary to travel by the southern route across the sea, Japan's intercourse being thus confined to the southern dynasties of Sung and Liang. Yet even then the character that the journey bore in the recollection of those who had performed it may be gathered from the writings of Chōnen, a Bonze who, in company with five acolytes, travelled to the court of the Sung Emperor in the year 984 A. D. "I turn my face to the setting sun and journey westward over a hundred thousand *li* (thirty-three thousand miles) of boundless billows. I watch for the monsoon and return eastward, climbing over thousands of thousands of wave-mountain peaks. Toward the end of summer I raise my anchor at Chêh-Kiang, and in the early spring I reach the suburbs of my metropolis." Thus the journey occupied six months even in Chōnen's day. What time and toil must it have involved nine centuries earlier! Yet, as we have said, it was made again and again by Japanese envoys from the year 57 A. D. onward. No wonder that a Chinese emperor (Wu Ti, 421 A. D.) expressed approval of the "distant loyalty" of *Wo*. To the resolute persistence that she showed in thus maintaining relations with China, Japan owed a large debt of civilization, for it must be frankly admitted that the seeds of the intellectual, artistic, industrial and moral progress attained by her in later eras were gathered either in the Middle Kingdom itself, or in Korea, whither they had been transported from China. What was the condition of the Japanese before those seeds began to be planted, or, at any rate, before they had borne much fruit in the new soil? What were the manners and customs of the Japanese during the centuries that preceded the compilation of their written records?

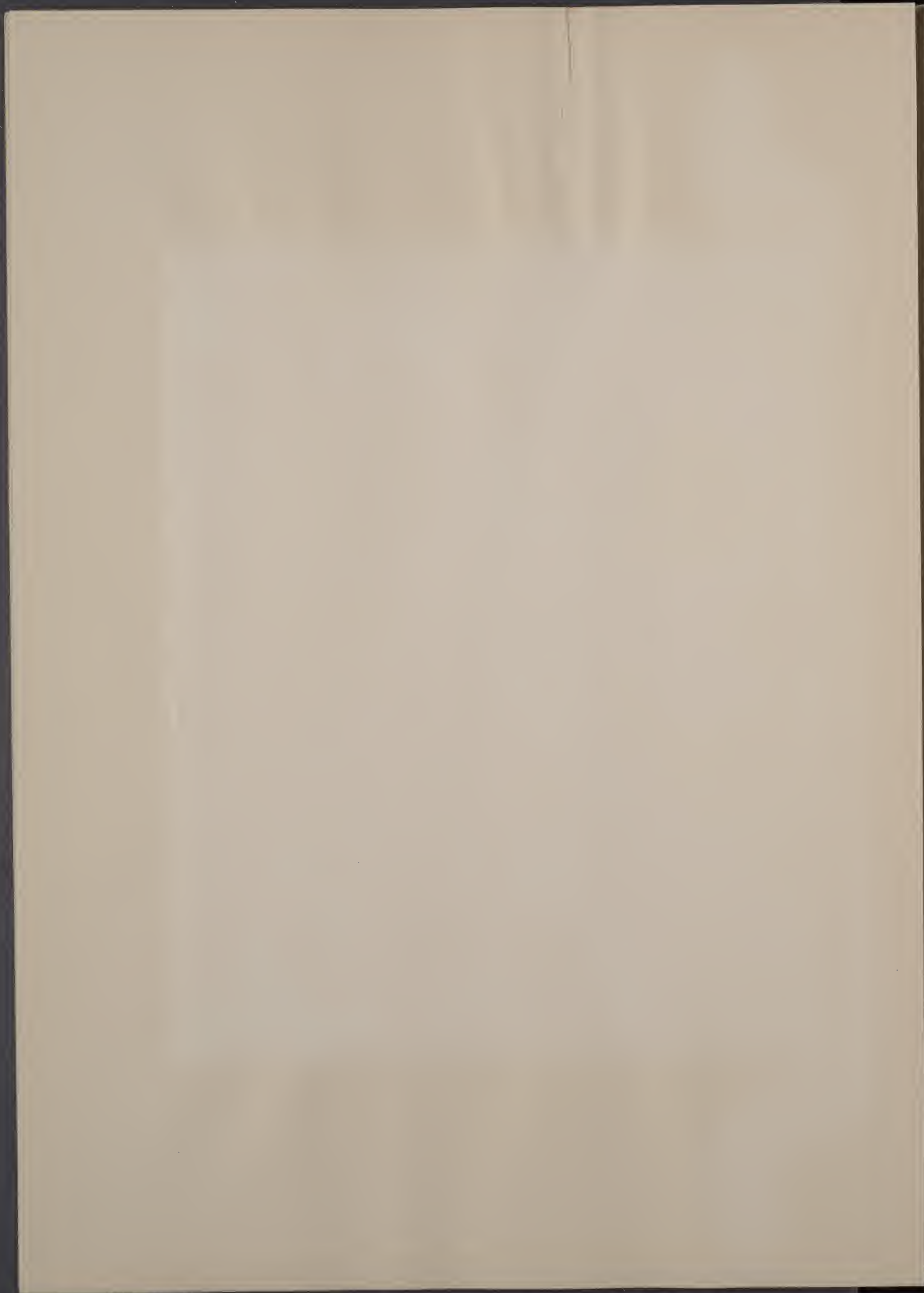
Tolerably clear information on these interesting questions is afforded by two sets of Chinese annals, one treating of the first two centuries of the Christian era, the other relating to the period 220 to 280 A. D., and both compiled either contemporaneously with the events they discuss, or within the lapse of a few years after them. In these records it is stated, in a general way, that Japan — *Wo* is, of course, the term used, but the repetition of these ancient names is confusing and unnecessary — being situated at a short distance from the island of Hainan, the laws and customs of the two places bore more or less resemblance to each other. The soil was very fertile, producing rice and other cereals, as well as cocoons and mulberry, and the seas abounded with fish. The climate was so mild that vegetables grew in winter as well as in summer. White pearls, greenish jade and cinnabar were among the natural productions. The people knew how to weave yarn into stout cotton fabrics. For weapons of war they had spears, shields, bows of wood, and arrows tipped with iron or bone. The men tattooed their faces and bodies, the position and size of the designs constituting an indication of rank. This habit of tattooing, we may note *en passant*, was considered barbarous by the Chinese. In the annals from which we are quoting it is elsewhere stated that people given to tattooing their bodies and cutting their hair could not be counted as observing the rules of

LANTERN MAKERS.

Lanterns and umbrellas made of paper, with bamboo frames and decorated by hand, are manufactured in many small shops, and each workman exercises his own taste and skill in designing and coloring them. Freed from the limitations of machine-made products, each article has a certain originality about it and differs more or less from others of its kind.







civilization. An interesting point is the explanation of the origin of the custom, according to the same annalists. They allege that the first rulers of Japan were wandering princes of the Chou dynasty (1200 B. C.), who abandoned their patrimony in China and migrated southwards, cutting their hair and tattooing themselves to mark the completeness of their expatriation. Such evidence is too meagre to be conclusive either as to the origin of the custom or the *provenance* of the Mongoloid section of the Japanese race. But it has at least the merit of offering some hypothesis about a peculiarity for which the Japanese themselves fail to account with any thoroughness. Another well-known Chinese work regards tattooing by the *Wo* tribes as a protection against the attacks of marine creatures of prey, a theory consistent with the diving habits of the Japanese coastwise population, but not reconcilable with the statement that even the upper classes affected the tattooing custom. There are, indeed, strong reasons to doubt whether tattooing was at any time so prevalent among the Japanese proper as these ancient Chinese annals lead us to suppose. It is conceivable that the annalists failed to distinguish between the inhabitants of the Riukiu archipelago and the people of Nippon, for the latter decline to admit that the tattooing of the face was ever practised by their ancestors, whereas the habit certainly had vogue among the people of Riukiu.

With regard to clothing and personal adornment, the annals relate that the men had garments folded horizontally round their bodies, and that the women wore a robe of one thickness of cloth, put on by passing over the head, dressed their hair in a coiled knot, and used cinnabar as a cosmetic in the same way that the Chinese used rice powder. Both sexes went barefoot. There were stockaded houses and forts. Food was taken with the hands, but platters of bamboo and other woods were used. A respectful attitude was assumed by



JAPANESE KITE AND STILTS.

The Japanese call their stilts "bamboo legs." Kites are made in a great variety as to form and color.

squatting down. Women were in the majority, and men of rank had four or five wives, two or three sufficing for inferior persons. There was a tendency to indulge in strong drink. The women were neither sensual nor jealous. There was no robbery or petty theft, and litigation was rare. Lawbreakers suffered severe punishments, their wives and children being

reduced to the position of slaves, or even extirpated in extreme cases. The dead lay in state for ten days or more, during which time various performances of song, music and dancing took place. After the obsequies the whole family performed ablutions. Omens were drawn from scorched bones, and false diviners often met with death at the hands of those they misled. Distinctions of rank existed, some being vassals and some lords, and if an inferior met a superior the former had to step out of the road, and had also to squat or kneel, with both hands on the ground when addressing his superior—a custom, be it observed, which remains in vogue until the present day. Taxes were collected, and in each province there were markets where the people bartered their superfluous produce for any articles that they needed. Of Tsushima and Iki it is added that the rice and grain produced in these islands not being sufficient for the use of the population, ships were sent to the north and south to procure supplies.

Such were the Japanese up to the year 280 A. D.; not a highly civilized or refined people, according to modern standards, but very far removed from the ranks of barbarians or savages. Growing rice and cereals, weaving cotton, understanding sericulture, using iron to tip their arrows, not prone to robbery, and wearing garments of good material, they certainly could claim to have long emerged from a primitive state. A much fuller account is contained in the volumes of the great Chinese historian, Ma Twan-lin, but it refers to a later period, namely, the year 600 A. D. An envoy from Japan arriving that year at the court of the Sui dynasty, the Emperor gave instructions that he should be questioned about Japanese customs, and his answers having been transcribed, apparently with great care, constitute the most accurate and trustworthy statement on record of the conditions existing in Japan a hundred and eleven years prior to the compilation of the earliest written annals that her native scholars transmitted to posterity. We are thus enabled not only to learn much about the Japanese at a time of which their own accounts belong to the category of apocryphal traditions, but also to form a tolerably accurate idea of the progress made by the nation between the third and the seventh centuries of the Christian era, a period of over three hundred years.

The gist of the story told by the Japanese envoy in the year 600 A. D., and committed to writing by scribes of the Chinese Court, is this: There were in Japan twelve administrative chiefs and an indefinite number of inferior officials. No cities existed, in the Chinese sense of the term, that is to say, no walled cities, but the empire was divided into a hundred and twenty provinces, as well as into districts of eighty households, each district presided over by a head-man, and ten districts forming a province. It would thus appear that there were 960,000 households in all, and if we assume the average number of persons in a household to have been five, the population of Japan at that epoch was four million eight hundred thousand. The dress of the men was a skirted garment with very small sleeves—that is to say, very small when measured by Chinese standards. On their feet they wore a species of sandal, having the upper face lacquered, and bound to the foot. The lower orders, however,

went barefoot, for the most part. They were forbidden to use gold or silver ornaments, and they often wore a *sarong*—that is to say, a garment in the Malayan style—the ends of which were tied but never sewn. Prior to the era of the *Sui* dynasty (580–617 A. D.) they had no headgear, and their hair was allowed to fall down over the ears, but in the *Sui* time they adopted hats, gayly ornamented with flowers carved out of gold or silver. The women bound up their hair behind; wore the same kind of skirted robe as the men; had all their lower garments braided or trimmed round the edges, and manufactured combs out of sharpened bits of bamboo. Many of them also tattooed the arm and painted the face. Various skins were employed to make upper garments, patterned skins serving for trimming. Mats for the floor (*tatami*) were woven out of straw. Bows, arrows barbed with iron or bone, swords, cross bows, long and short spears, and armor made of lacquered hide constituted their warlike equipment. Murder, robbery with violence and rape were punished with death, but in cases of robbery without violence, compensation alone was exacted, and if the thief possessed no property, he had to become a slave. Banishment or beating was the penalty for other offences. At judicial trials persons charged with grave crimes were subjected to torture if they refused to confess, their knees being crushed with a block of wood, or their necks sawn with the taut string of a strong bow. Trial by ordeal was also resorted to: disputants were required to pick stones out of boiling water, or extract snakes from jars, a scald or a bite suffered in the process being held to prove guilt. The people were docile, and not prone to litigation or to theft. There were about a hundred thousand families of musicians in the country, and five varieties of musical instruments, among them the guitar—predecessor of the modern *samisen*—and the flute.

One method of taking fish was to dive into the sea. Another was to put small rings round the necks of cormorants, which were trained to go into the water and catch fish, each bird capturing over a hundred in a day. This is the *u-dzkai*, a favorite pursuit even at present. They had no written character of their own, merely using notched wood or knotted cords to record events, until the Buddhist *sutras* were introduced from Peh-tsi (in Korea), when they embraced Buddhism and adopted ideographs. They practised divination, and believed in wizards and witches. The first day of the first month of the year was a great festival: shooting matches took place and there was much drinking. For the rest, their fête-days closely resembled those of China. They were fond of such games as chess, draughts (*go*) and dice; were frank in disposition and refined in manner. Large leaves served them instead of dishes or bowls, and they used their fingers in eating. Persons of the same family name did not intermarry, but with that exception marriages were not subject to any restrictions. When a bride entered her husband's house, she had to step over fire. The women were neither sensual nor jealous. The dead were placed in a double coffin; white was the mourning color, and singing and dancing formed part of the funeral rites. A nobleman's body lay in state for three years, but the day for burying a commoner was fixed by divination,

and when sepulture took place the coffin was dragged to the cemetery in a boat or on a cart. This remarkably minute record speaks also of a kind of "wishing pearl," said to have been the eye of a fish, darkish in tinge, as big as a hen's egg and capable of shining at night; and tells of Mount Aso, now recognized as the largest crater in the world, from which, at that remote date, huge flames shot up to the sky, and to which the people sacrificed and prayed.

There is no reason whatever to question the authenticity or accuracy of this account. It may be accepted as a trustworthy, though of course incomplete, description of the Japanese at the beginning of the seventh century of the Christian era, and it shows that their civilization had then progressed very materially. With the exception of the Greeks, the Romans, the Chinese and the Koreans, they were evidently the most civilized nation in the world at that epoch. Possibly they had outstripped the Koreans, but as to that we cannot speak definitely. The notice summarized above from Ma Twan-lin's history concludes by saying that both Shinra and Peh-tsi, the two principal States in southern Korea, considered Japan a great country with many precious things, and that embassies were constantly passing between them. Moreover, a Korean writer, referring to events that occurred at the close of the fourth century, says that the sovereign of Peh-tsi, "having behaved disrespectfully to the honorable country" (Japan), "was deprived of five districts, and had to send his son to the Celestial Court to renew the friendly relations formerly existing." Such language indicates that however greatly Japan was indebted to Korea for aids to civilization,—and the Japanese themselves frankly acknowledge the weight of the obligation,—the island empire had earned the respect and homage of the peninsula kingdom at a very early date. China, on the other hand, remained always supercilious and lofty. The answer she sent to the Empress Jingo by the latter's envoys was characteristic: "I now pack up securely five pieces of brown silk embroidered with dragon designs; ten brown hair carpets with patterns in silk; eight ounces of gold; two five-feet swords, a hundred copper mirrors, and fifty pounds each of pearls and red lead, in order to teach your countrymen how the government pities you and therefore honors you with nice things."¹ Even as late as the year 984, when the Japanese priest Chōnen visited the Sung Court and presented various articles, including a volume of history, the Emperor spoke of the Japanese as "island barbarians," though, at the same time, the unbroken continuity of their line of sovereigns from remote eras excited his admiration. That note of contempt has invariably disturbed the harmony of Japan's relation with her neighbor. It sounded again as harshly as ever in 1894, when the present Emperor, in his declaration of war, called the Japanese *Wo-jên*, well aware of the disdainfully insulting character of the epithet, and of the protest that Japan had entered against its use twelve centuries previously. It is possible that when Michizane, one of Japan's greatest statesmen, recommended, in 894 A. D., the discontinuance of the practice of sending embassies to China, he appreciated the interpretation attached to such missions by the Middle Kingdom, and the

¹ The *Wei-Chi*. Translated by Parker.

humiliating position to which his country had been relegated by every Chinese ruler from Kwang Wu-ti to Chaotsung. Michizane's advice, though it had the effect of terminating the official intercourse between the two empires, did not interrupt their trade or check the stream of students and religionists who from year to year visited China, either to obtain copies of the Mahâyana Law, the great Tibetan Sutras, and other renowned tomes, or to hold converse with the philosophers and literati of the most erudite court in the East, or to study arts and sciences, or to sit at the feet of wonderful calligraphists whose equals Japan could seldom produce.



FARMER POUNDING RICE.

A large wooden pestle and mortar are used to hull the rice before sending it to the market in the city.

It is curious to observe how, all through the records of both countries, there runs a strain of reverent admiration for skill in penmanship. Nothing illustrates more vividly the stupendous effort of industry, memory, artistic perception and manual dexterity necessary to master the ideographic script than the fact that, in grave records of ambassadorial qualifications and proceedings, ability to write well ranked high among the achievements of which posterity was informed. Kurita, who in Japan possessed the title of Ason Mabito, seems to have been the first Japanese visitor to the Middle Kingdom whose manner of forming ideographs elicited the approval of the severe critics at Singan. His raiment, his calligraphy and his bearing—these are the three features that annalists have immortalized. He wore a purple robe and a silk girdle; on his head was the *shintoku-kan*, a hat with four gorgeous flowers; he was a student, a good penman, and a person of graceful deportment. The year 701 A. D. has bequeathed to us that historical epitaph. Of Shakunen, who visited the *Sung* Court three hundred years later (1004 A. D.), and on whom the Emperor Chintsung conferred a title and a robe of honor, the only facts recorded are that he could not speak Chinese, but that he knew the written character and was a wonderfully clever calligraphist. A special education, a special range of experience, is needed before any Occidental can begin to appreciate the subtle qualities of force, delicacy, grace and directness that Japanese and Chinese eyes discover in the face of an ideograph. Full appreciation is probably impossible. Just as in the performance called dancing by the Japanese, that rhythmic

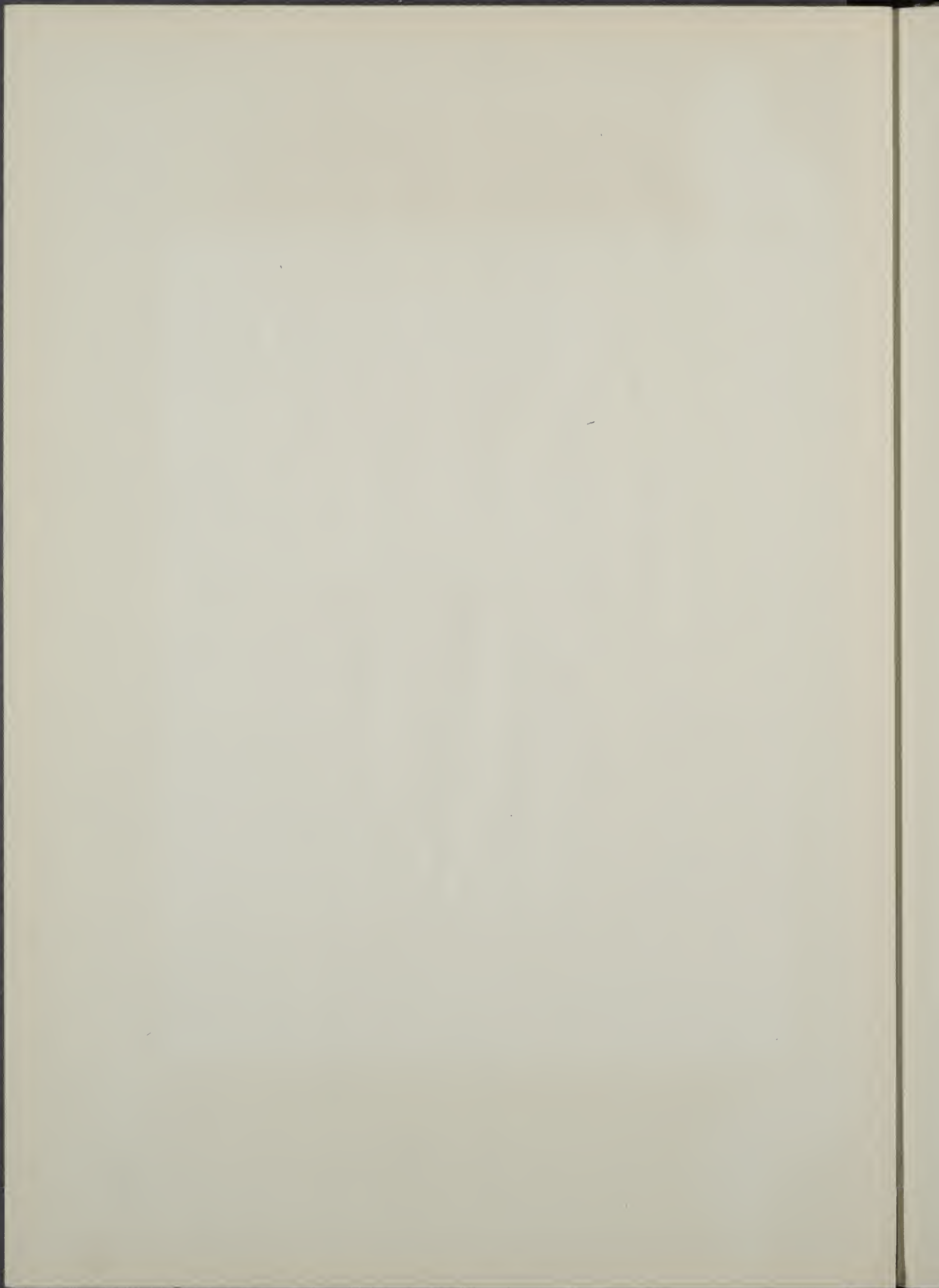
waving of hands and weaving of paces, there is a music of motion whose harmony hereditarily developed senses alone can detect and admire, so in the ideograph's equipoise of stroke and space, its soft strength of line and unerring accuracy of vinculum, its dashing boldness of tracery and delicate transitions of direction, there are beauties that thrill the native of China or Japan, but remain utterly imperceptible to the Occidental. It has its cadence and its cæsura; it is at once a poem and a picture; scrolls of ideographs, traced by the brushes of renowned experts, rank with the masterpieces of the greatest artists, and generation after generation of Japanese hold in honor the memories of their three "Kings of Calligraphy"—the Emperor Saga, the priest Kobodaishi and the nobleman Tachibana Hayashi—and of their "Three Penmen" (*Sanseki*), Ono-no-Tofu, Fujiwara Sari and Fujiwara Kozai. That was the bond that bound Japan to China in the early centuries. The Middle Kingdom was the fountain of literature, the library of the whole Asiatic continent eastward of India. Japan drew upon it for all her stores of erudition, philosophy and science during the first seven or eight hundred years of the Christian era. On the other hand, the elements of civilization that she imported from Korea were connected with material progress, rather than with moral, if we except the introduction of Buddhism, to which memorable event detailed reference will presently be made. Of course there must always be some hesitation in tracing to its origin any Japanese industry or art that dates from a period prior to the compilation of her written annals. But the sources of error in these cases are not seriously prolific, for domestic traditions and special collateral evidence aid us in reaching the truth.

It has been shown, on the authority of Chinese records, that the Japanese understood the art of weaving as early as the close of the second century. It has also been shown that the inhabitants of the Korean peninsula, in a still more remote era, had stores of cloth and sumptuary officials; that they practised sericulture, and that on state occasions they wore garments of embroidered silk with gold and silver ornaments. Did Japan learn weaving and sericulture from Korea? There is some uncertainty whether the teaching came from China or Korea. At all events, the fact that the Koreans had carried those useful accomplishments to a higher degree of development than the Japanese, appears to be admitted by Japanese annals, for the ancestors of the two great families, the Shin and the Kan, with whose names the development of weaving, silk manufacture and embroidery is primarily connected in Japan, are said to have crossed from Korea in the fourth century.¹ These immigrants were distributed throughout the empire to give instruction in the arts of which they were master craftsmen. Eighty years later (470 A. D.)—a date fixed with tolerable accuracy—the Japanese Emperor (Yuriaku), desiring to effect improvements in the costume of his subjects, procured a number of female weavers and seamstresses from Wu in southern China, and organized a special State department under the name of *Kinu-nui-be* (silk embroidery

¹ The third century, according to Japanese historians, but modern research has proved that the dates at that particular era of Japanese history have to be increased by 120 years, namely, two cycles of the sexagenary calendar.

CHERRY BLOSSOMS AT KOGANEI.

Koganei is a suburb of Tokyo and is noted for its fine avenue of cherry trees $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length along the banks of the small canal that conducts the waters of the Tamagawa to Tokyo. Ten thousand young trees were planted here in 1735 by command of the Shogun Yoshimune.







section). At the same time mulberry plantations were formed at various places, and the members of the Shin family, then numbering some eighteen thousand persons, were brought together and organized under the superintendence of a high official, Hada-no-sake.

A word must be said here about the State called "Wu," according to Chinese pronunciation, and "Go," according to Japanese, for the name is of importance in the history of far-Eastern art, and has been a source of perplexity to many art critics, both Occidental and Oriental. *Wu*, as recorded in Chinese annals, was a State established in the twelfth or thirteenth century before the Christian era, at a place corresponding with the modern Soochow. Curiously enough, early Chinese annalists are disposed to trace some kind of racial connection between the Japanese and the people of *Wu*, whose rulers were supposed to have belonged originally to the Chou dynasty and to have moved to the south of the Yang-tse, cutting their hair and tattooing themselves as related above. Soochow being a part of China specially accessible from Japan, there would be no difficulty in identifying it as the place from which the Emperor Yuriaku obtained seamstresses and weavers in the year 470 A. D., did not one embarrassing fact present itself, namely, that *Wu*, as the appellation of a State, had ceased to exist long before Yuriaku's time. Mr. E. H. Parker, the well-known sinologue, thinks that the *Wu* in question was a State of the house of Sun, which had reigned at modern Nanking from 222 to 280 A. D., including two years at modern Wu-ch'ang, opposite Hankow. But this *Wu*

was a comparatively insignificant principality, at once difficult of access from Japan and not possessing any apparent claim to be associated with impulses of industrial or sumptuary progress. Moreover, it is surely a little unreasonable to assume that a small inland State, which came to an end in 280 A. D., should have been the source to which the

Japanese government addressed itself a hundred and ninety years later for industrial assistance. A more tenable hypothesis is that the *Wu* referred to in Japanese annals was the early *Wu*, the district comprising modern Soochow. It is to *Wu*, or *Go* as they call it, that the Japanese attribute their first knowledge of weaving and sewing. The point is



STONE STEPS LEADING TO TEMPLE IN TOKYO.

The trees on either side are *Cryptomerias*.

affirmed for all time by the general term that they apply to articles of raiment. *Gofuku* signifies "wearing apparel," *gofuku-ya*, a haberdasher, and the origin of the words is unhesitatingly referred by every educated Japanese to the fact that from *Go* came the earliest instruction in the manufacture of woven stuffs. We have already seen that, if Chinese annals be credible, the art of weaving was known and practised in Japan at the end of the second or the beginning of the third century, and it follows that the progressive measure adopted by Yuriaku in procuring the assistance of experts from the so-called *Go* was connected with the improvement, not the initiation, of the industry. At a later epoch, when the Japanese received from China the first specimens of porcelain decorated with blue under the glaze, they called the ware *Gosu-some-tsuke* or simply *Gosu*; and when, still later, porcelain decorated with vitrifiable enamels over the glaze came across the sea, they called it *Gosu-aka-ye*. It thus becomes plain that, in a general way, China was known to them as *Go*, and that they used the term somewhat indiscriminately to indicate Chinese origin. Whether the fact may be interpreted as suggesting a racial connection between a section of the Japanese people and the Chinese of Wu and Yüeh (modern Hangchow), is a point not determinable unless some ethnographical information fuller than that now in our possession be obtained.

After the importation of the *Go* experts vigorous measures were taken to develop sericulture, but it does not appear that the silk fabrics then produced were in general vogue. They were presented, for the most part, to the Emperor, and used to lie piled up in the palace until a special storehouse was built for their reception. Brocades, also, must have been manufactured, for we find a "brocade bureau" among the State offices of the time. The reader will always remember, of course, that the details here adduced were committed to writing at a period much later than the time actually in question, and that due allowance has to be made for the inaccuracy of tradition as compared with history. But whatever margin of chronological error be left on that account, we may at least be assured that the manufacturing and sumptuary conditions recorded to the beginning of the eighth century had been in existence for a long time previously. There is much to admire in the fine courage of the latest writers of Japanese history¹ who date the art of weaving in their country from the reign of the wayward goddess of the sun (Amaterasu); credit the Emperor Jimmu with taking a practical interest in clothing stuffs and the cultivation of hemp; conclude that red and green colors could be produced in that sovereign's day by dyeing processes, and assure us that the Japanese ladies and gentlemen of the seventh century before Christ wore hats, robes and pantaloons, as well as necklets and armlets of crystal beads, agate, glass, serpentine and polished gems. Even the Chinese had not yet begun to manufacture glass at that epoch; they enjoyed the exciting belief that the rare specimens brought to them by the Phœnicians were fragments of centenarian ice. In truth, the modern European or American, to whom

¹"History of the Empire of Japan," compiled for the Imperial Japanese Commission of the World's Columbian Exhibition by the Historiographical Committee of the Imperial University.

the idea of existence without a knowledge of writing is scarcely conceivable, has little capacity to appreciate the perplexities of the first Japanese annalists when they set themselves, in the year 711 A. D., to construct an account of the events of the preceding thirteen centuries. They were not much nearer morally to many of those events than we are to-day, and although we may credit them to the extent of admitting that they did not describe things having no actual existence, we cannot place much reliance on the dates that they assign for the origin of any particular custom or accomplishment. Thus, when they say that a band of weavers and seamstresses were invited over from southern China during the reign of Yuriaku, they merely record a tradition already more than two centuries old in their era. Our immediate task, however, is not to trace manufacturing processes or sumptuary habits back to their exact beginnings, but to see what debt Japan owed to China and Korea on account of them.



UMBRELLA MAKER.

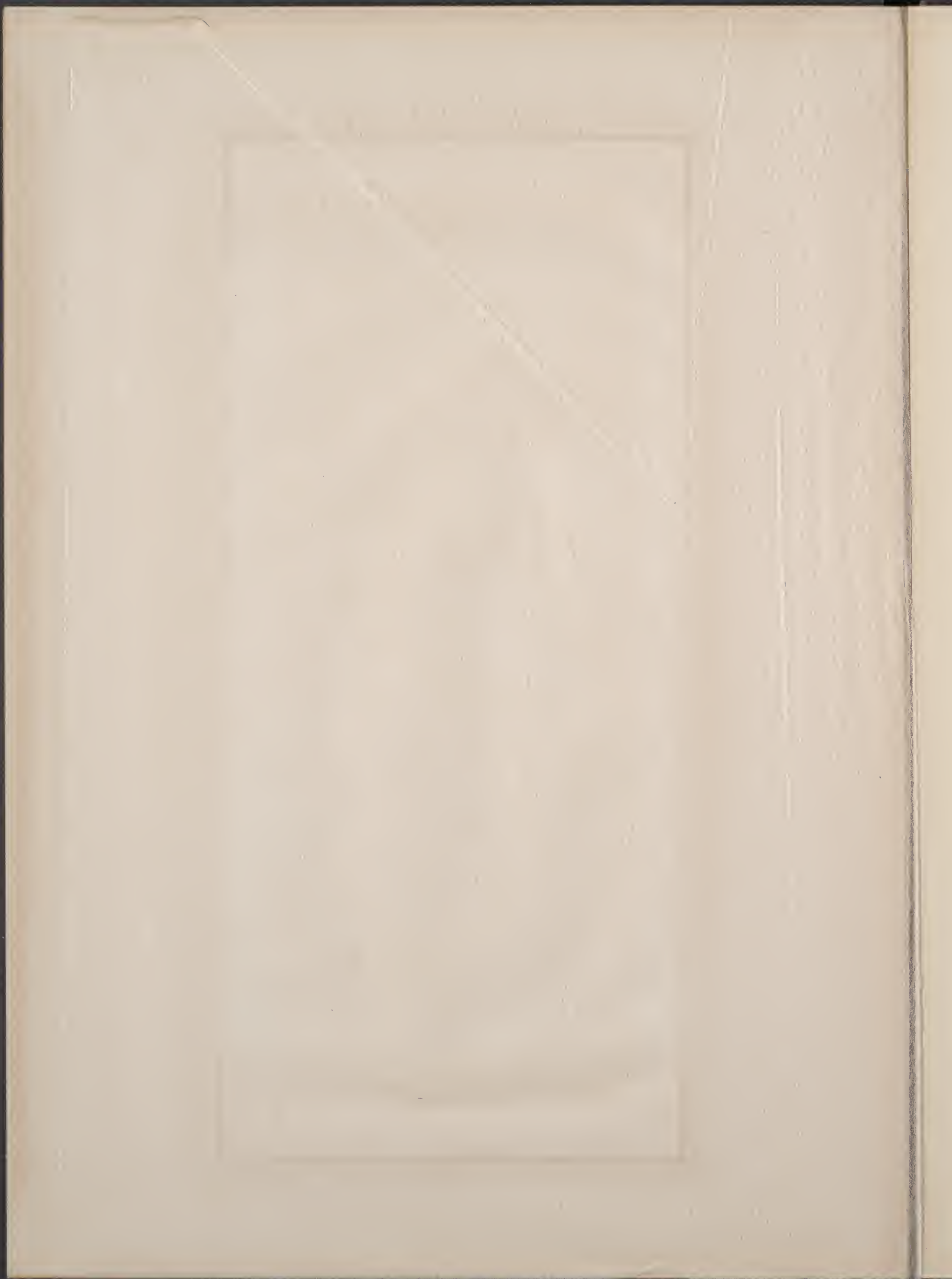
A bamboo frame covered with waterproof paper and decorated by hand is picturesque and serviceable in both hot and rainy weather.

To the reign of the same Emperor — Yuriaku (456-470) — is ascribed the building of the first two-storied house in Japan. Hitherto the method of constructing a residence had been to sink wooden posts in the ground as supports for a thatched roof, to the timbers of which the posts were tied by ligatures of wistaria and other creepers—a rude structure. Korean architects are supposed to have taught better methods, though it seems strange that the Japanese, who through their embassies to the courts of the *Han*, the *Tsin* and the *Sung* must have become familiar with the splendors of the capitals at Loyang (Honan), Singan and Nanking, should have remained, until the middle of the fifth century, content with such primitive dwellings. A hundred years after Yuriaku's time, that is to say, toward the close of the sixth century, the Buddhist creed having taken firm root in Japan, edifices magnificent in comparison with anything that had preceded them began to be built, according to designs

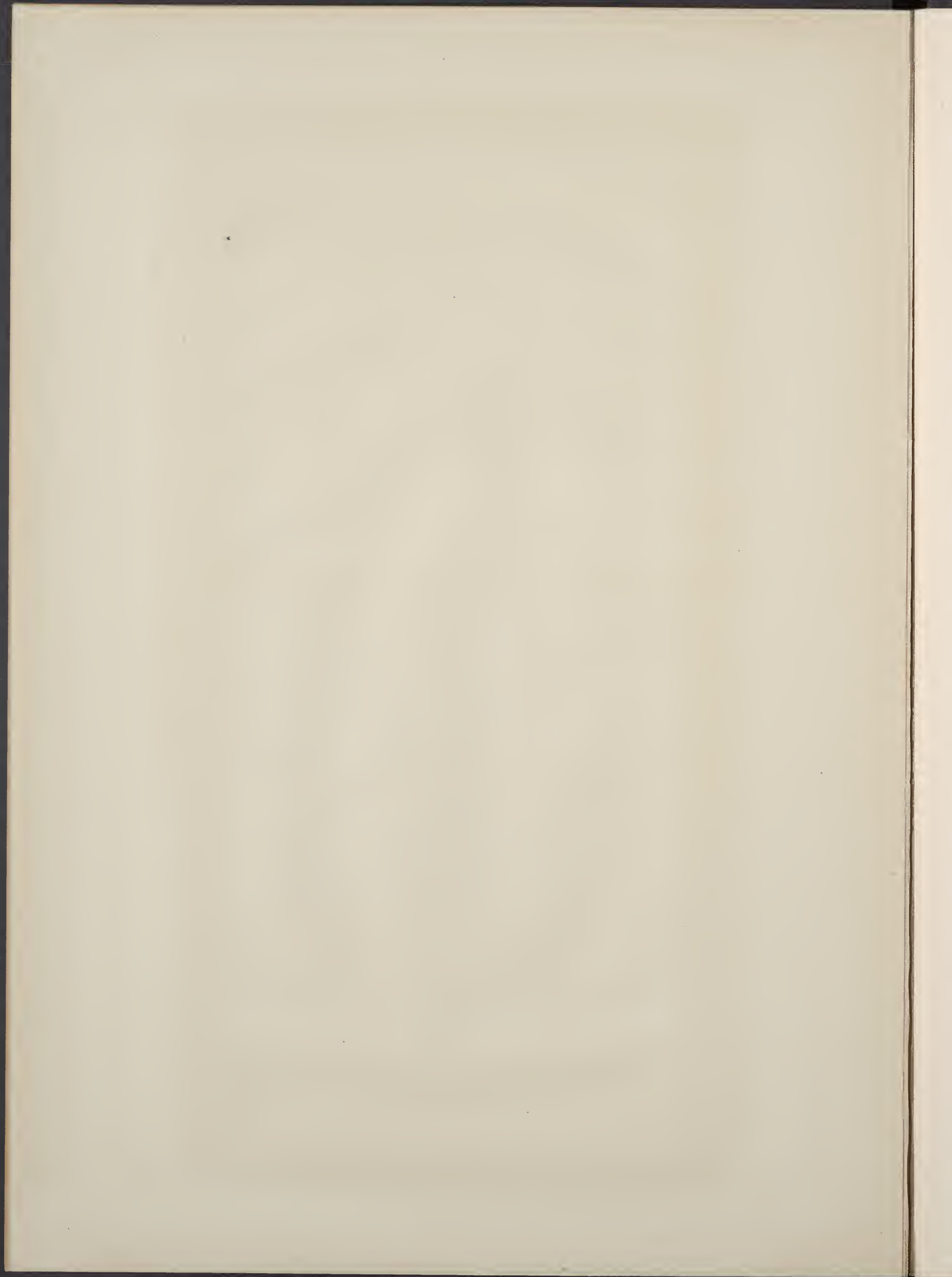
furnished by Korean architects, for the reception of images and the worship of the new god. The fashion thus set by the votaries of the imported religion was soon followed by private individuals, Korean experts being still employed. Shortly afterwards, tile-makers came over from the peninsula and taught that useful art, though the production of glazed tiles such as the Chinese were already using was not understood by the Koreans of that era, and remained for several centuries beyond the capacity of the Japanese. With regard to the forging of iron, it is difficult to determine whether Japan owed the knowledge to one of her neighbors, Korea or China, or whether she may herself be credited with the initiative. But her people admit frankly that from Korean blacksmiths they learned how to manufacture metal objects of large dimensions. The tanner's art, also, was introduced from Korea in the latter half of the fifth century, and the processes were materially improved by Chinese craftsmen who visited Japan at the invitation of Yuriaku. The making of paper and ink, the concoction of dyes and the preparation of whetstones are attributed to a Korean priest who arrived in Japan at the end of the sixth century; the medical art was acquired from China, and Chinese therapeutics continued to be practised generally in Japan until Occidental science replaced it; the use of the calendar was due to Chinese instruction at the beginning of the seventh century; the pictorial art may be said to have come in the train of Buddhism, and shipwrights were among the gifts that Korea bestowed on Japan.

Thus the catalogue of Japan's debts to her two neighbors is formidable. She outstripped them both in later ages, and many of the improvements that she made in the arts and industries derived from them amount almost to metamorphoses. But the original obligation cannot be denied, and is not denied by the Japanese themselves. The Koreans, indeed, have no title to rank higher than media for transmitting the elements of a civilization whose prime source was China. It was their good fortune to be twice invaded by Chinese armies in days prior to the compilation of Japan's earliest history: once in the second century before the Christian era and once in the seventh century after it. On neither occasion did they long enjoy the advantages of direct Chinese rule, but after the conquest of northwestern Korea in 108 B. C. by the *Han* forces, it remained for a considerable period under the vice-regal sway of the Middle Kingdom, and there can be no doubt that whatever arts and sciences China had then developed were brought within reach of the inhabitants of the peninsula, to be transmitted by them in turn to the Japanese. Buddhism, however, was the grand civilizing influence in the far East. The circumstances of its advent to Japan will be related by and by, but we have to note here that just as Christianity, whatever obstacles it once placed in the path of scientific progress, has long marched in the van of Occidental civilization, so Buddhism, from the sixth century onward, not only presided over the moral and intellectual training of the Japanese, but also set before them object lessons in art and refinement without which their progress must have been immeasurably slower.









A PAINTING OF THE KASUGA SCHOOL.

ELEVENTH CENTURY.

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ELEVENTH CENTURY.

The peace and prosperity which the manly policy of the early Kyoto emperors helped to produce were, however, destined to pave the way for the exquisite indolence of the succeeding age. The regular sending of envoys to the Chinese court was stopped in the tenth century, owing partly to continental disturbances and partly to the national pride which disdained to borrow her somewhat effete culture. Japan, isolated as in the days of the Tokugawas, with no stimulus for emulation and improvement, felt herself free to wander in the spring mist of idle refinement. The milder form of Buddhism as taught by Yeshinsodzu and his pupils, assisted to purify but not to stem the current of the easy-going age. The severe doctrines of Kobo and Dengio, which sought salvation through the development of self, through its struggles and denials until the final reunion with Buddha-head, were now softened into the belief of salvation through higher powers. The human soul, too heavily laden with vanities and follies, was unable of itself to soar into the skies. Only by fervent prayer to Amitaba of the Boundless Light, or through the intercession of his messenger or manifestation, the Goddess (?) Avalokita, can the misguided spirits join in the eternal glory. Religion, according to the new sect of Jodo, or Pure Land, was an appeal and not a conquest,—a work of love and forgiveness, not of judgment and trial. Perhaps here Buddhism approaches nearest to the halo of the Eternal Feminine.

And surely no age had more need of pity and forgiveness for its follies than that of Fujiwara, so called from the all-powerful house from which the empresses were chosen, whose members held all the honors of the imperial court, whose arrogance and extravagance could not be suppressed even under the firm emperors Wuda and Gosanjo, nor by wise statesmen like Michizane and Kiyotsura. Jurisdiction and administration were considered beneath the aristocratic dignity, and the young governors of provinces, who boasted of never having left the capital, vied with the generals of the Imperial guard, to whom swords were cumbersome ornaments, in inventing new steps for the Bugaku dance or in inditing new poems. Princes voluntarily exiled themselves into the country, or took the monastic vows for the sake of their ladies. Women set the style in literature as in art. The brilliant Murasakishikibu, the rich authoress of the Genji romance, the refined and cynical Seishonagon, and the sad, beautiful poetess Komachi, were models eagerly imitated by men, and their works eventually formed the basis of the present national literature.

The painting reproduced in the accompanying plate, evidently a work of the eleventh century, represents the Ichijikinrin, the Vairocana Buddha, in his perfection. But the Buddha-head is conceived, not with the awful strength of the supreme manhood, but akin to the resigned calm of the Buddha-mother (Butsu-mo). It is by an artist of the school of Kasuga. The hereditary artists of the Kasuga temple, which used to be the family church of the Fujiwaras, preserved the traditions of the Nara school, and when the rise of the Fujiwara house was joined with the decline of Tang Art, a chance of revival arrived. In their delicate technique we find, however, a new meaning peculiar to this epoch.

Okakura Kakuzo







